

AN ANALYSIS OF FUNCTION AND STRUCTURE
IN A CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTRE

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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ROLE-SET THEORY

AN ANALYSIS OF FUNCTION AND STRUCTURE
IN A CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTRE

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ABSTRACT

Employing a theory of the middle range, Merton's conceptual view of Status and Role-Sets, I examined a Drug Crisis Intervention Centre focusing on the Crisis Counsellor as Status-Occupant.

It was hypothesized that a potential for conflict exists when a union of two or more groups occurs, if the group members occupy divergent positions in the social framework.

This potential is established; when the central interests of one group are perceived as peripheral by the other, and when differing expectations are held by each, appertaining to the process of problem solving.

It was also hypothesized that even when a potential for conflict has been established, that is two different groups of people are enjoined contemporaneously in the same enterprise; this potential is not fully realized. This is due to the functioning of one or more operatives contained within the social structure that allows social relationships to continue with relative stability.

I examined the crisis intervention centre using Merton's six social mechanisms as an analytical model.

I found that this combination of mechanisms is able to furnish moderate amounts of protection. While the stage was set for serious conflict, its full potential was never realized. No single circumstance or situation caused a major disruption with the Role-Set.

It was the case, though, that over a period of time the accumulation of residual conflict becomes concentrated with the result that the mechanisms are no longer able to keep the conflict visibility in check. When this point was reached abridgement of the Role-Set occurred. The individual left, the social structure remained.

CHAPTER I

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

The study undertaken was generated by an experience a few years back. I intend to briefly recapitulate that experience so as to place the problem in perspective.

During the summer of 1970 I was involved in the operation of a summer camp for city kids. I was included in a group of university students who had received a government grant to fund the project. We therefore had salary to pay the staff but we lacked the premises on which to locate the project. Our search for an appropriate site brought us to enter into negotiations with a local chapter of a major religious denomination. This church owned suitable camping grounds; playing fields, swimming facilities, eight permanent cabins, and a large central lodge. This site was fairly close to the city. At the time we approached the church committee they were confronted with the problem of staffing their regular camps, that were held periodically throughout the summer. The accommodation was mutual, it seemed that each party was able to provide the other with the ideal complement. To further strengthen the agreement the aims of each group - to provide recreational services to city children who would otherwise be denied such opportunity - appeared coincidental.

The necessary arrangements were consummated and preparations began in a most amicable atmosphere. This initial harmony did not last. At first it appeared that the disagreements were only minor, ones that could be expected to crop up occasionally in any organization, and subsequently be settled in due course. The nature of the conflicts remained the same but the number increased. During this time it occurred to me that the discord was more of a prominent feature rather than a routine one, I feared that it would be sustained throughout the duration of the summer. It was during the third meeting of the two groups that the dissension started to acquire definition. The Chairman of the Church Committee inquired casually of the student group:

Chairman: "Who will be responsible for the grant when the money actually arrives?"

Student: "Our group will."

Chairman: "No, I mean who will have control over it?"

Student: "We will."

Chairman: "You mean that you will have the power to sign your own cheques and dispense money for expences, that no adult will be in control?"

Student : "That is true, we will be responsible for all aspects of the finances."

Chairman: (aside to fellow member of the committee)
"No wonder the government is in such a mess."

It was partly disturbing and partly amusing to realize that at this stage of the project the members of the church committee did not have confidence in the counsellors as a group. They appeared to view us as a convenience, necessary only to continue their summer program without losing money as they had done in the previous years.

The situation that now existed, appeared to the student group as one characterized by an exceptional inversion of priorities. The church committee was willing to entrust the student group with hundreds of children (ages 9-14) over a ten week period, but did not feel that they were capable of handling the finances. A clearer view of the ranking of priorities was presented at a meeting some days before the camp was to be opened. The counsellors planned to move out two weeks in advance to get settled away. Discussion on the activity to take

place during this time went like this:

Member of Student Group: "Well after looking at the place we agreed that it would be a good idea to clear up the grounds, work on the sports field, clean the beach and construct a small dock for canoeing."

Chairman: "We thought you could begin by painting the lodge."

The main area of contention was that of the power structure. The church committee assumed that a hierarchical structure existed, with command descending downward from their chairman. This was generally evidenced by the nature of orders, and the manner in which the same were given. Confirmation of that assumption occurred when the Chairman of the Church Committee designated one of the student group as the member in charge, the one with whom they would conduct all further business.

The student group rejected the values of the camp committee. One meeting had been initiated by a short prayer in which the suppliant had asked his divinity for benign guidance over the proceedings. After the meeting the student group made light of that incident with such remarks as "God bless this paper clip, look with favour on this inkwell."

After ~~some~~ attempts, to obtain basic arts and crafts materials and recreational equipment, met with failure, the student group offered to pay for the supplies out of their own wages.

The student group resented the manner in which the church committee assumed authority. They had, without any assistance from the church, obtained the funds, organized the plans and completed the proceedings for the whole of the venture. They felt that this was their project.

The church committee had held 'authoritative control' over their counsellors in all previous years. In spite of the fact that they were not paying wages, nor dealing with the same people, they still felt that camp counsellors were subservient to the camp committee. In addition to this the officers of the camp committee were elders of the church and respected businessmen in the community. They were not accustomed to having their decisions queried by people who were not only many years their junior, but also subordinate in social status.

During the first five weeks it was becoming increasingly evident to me (and I was not alone in my musings) that both parties were in for a checkered and arduous summer. However as time progressed it became

apparent, albeit ironic, that the most severe turbulence had already passed. The camp completed a successful season with minimum disputations. I considered the events of that summer with some deliberation. I was, in retrospect, able to formulate some general ideas that concerned both social relationships and social structures. These ideas led me to investigate further the phenomena in question.

It is not an unusual social situation for parties to be organized into collective units for the mutual sharing of tasks or attainment of goals. These units may be composed of two or more people, two or more groups, or a combination of any two or more groups and people. The union might be a positive choice, both parties have the same or similar aims and wish to pool resources for maximum results. Or the union may be a 'limited forced' choice, as it was in our experience, in which parties with the same or similar aims simply traded in 'excess' to obtain for their 'deficits'. I use the word 'forced' here, because the church committee did not match our idea of good administration. We were forced to accept them in that they, and none other, had the type of grounds that we wanted. I use the word 'limited' because we were not

totally forced into the union; we could have opted for inferior grounds, or we could have abandoned the project and found alternate summer employment.

When such a union as this latter one, has occurred, a potential for conflict is created. In our case it modified both the 'aims' and the 'means'. In the first instance the situation arises such that aims of any one party are of primary significance only to the members contained within it, the remainder of the group would consider these particular aims as peripheral. In the second instance, the potential for conflict is derived from the differing expectations held by individuals or parties appertaining to the process of problem solving.

I was now at the point of being able to make two important statements regarding the union of the church and student groups.

- (1) The conflicts that had arisen, in subsequent frequency, were uncharacteristic of a natural flow of events.
- (2) The membership of the Student-Church Group was composed of two sets of people who appeared, prima facie, to occupy divergent positions in the social framework.

To release myself from the topical confinements of the local situation I phrased these two general statements into a definite hypothesis. "The function of the disparity between the members of a group would vary in direct proportion to the extremeness of their polarity located within the social structure."

I was sure about the first of my statements, but was forced to choose from three conclusions, that would seek to explain the other suppositions. The first possibility was, that statement number two was invalid, that is the membership of the Student-Church Group actually contained two groups of people who occupied convergent positions in the social framework. The second, was that my hypothesis was invalid, that is, member-occupants located diversely in the social structure would actually have similar expectations about conduct and goals. The third possibility, and the one that seemed inherently logical, was that both the statements and the original hypothesis were valid. To account for the apparent incongruity I then found it necessary to formulate a completely new hypothesis.

"(Even) When a potential for conflict has been established, that is two different groups of people are enjoined contemporaneously in the same enterprise, this potential is not realized in full. This is due to the functioning of one or more operatives, contained within the social structure, that allow social relationships to continue with relative stability."

All of these ideas were developed directly from the unfolding of events during that summer and assembled in retrospect. For this reason, (and others), it was impossible to test the hypothesis with reference to the Student-Church Group.

It was therefore necessary to find a project with a structural framework congruent to the original.

CHAPTER II

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RESEARCH DESIGN

The Role-Set Theory of Robert Merton was selected as a model and modified for use. The rationale for the choice follows.

I was now prepared to select an appropriate research design. Selltitz et. al. (1964) offer the prospective researcher a choice of three distinct types of designs, each constructed to "combine relevance to research purpose with economy in procedure..."

When the purpose of the investigation is...to portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation, or group (with or without specific initial hypotheses about the nature of these characteristics) ⁽¹⁾... the authors advise the utilization of a descriptive study design.

It is important to keep in mind some general characteristics that are associated with descriptive studies. Selltitz et. al. suggest the following:

- (1) There is a considerable array of research interests, which may be grouped under the heading of descriptive studies.
- (2) The research question presupposes much prior knowledge of the problem to be investigated, as contrasted with the questions that form the basis for exploratory studies.
- (3) Descriptive studies are not limited to any one method of data collection.

- (4) Although descriptive studies may use a wide range of techniques, this does not mean that they are characterized by the flexibility that marks exploratory studies. The procedures to be used in a descriptive study must be carefully planned. Because the aim is to obtain complete and accurate information, the research design must make much more provision for protection against bias than is required in exploratory studies. Because of the amount of work frequently involved in descriptive studies, concern with economy of research effort is extremely important. These considerations of economy and protection against bias enter at every stage: formulating the objectives of the study; designing the methods of data collections; selecting the sample; collecting, processing, and analyzing the data and reporting the findings. (2)

Of the four previously mentioned points I was primarily concerned with the last statement. I therefore devised a framework for my study (within the limits of a lone researcher) that traced as closely as possible the structured design outlined by the authors, and yet retained the integral features that were necessary for adaptation to my study.

DEFINITION OF THE QUESTION

This follows directly from the hypothesis listed as 3. in section THE RESEARCH PROBLEM, page nine. "Even

when a potential for conflict has been established...this potential is not realized in full. This is due to the functioning of one or more operatives, contained within the social structure that allow social relationships to continue with relative stability."

DEFINITION OF THE STUDY GROUP

1. The membership of the study group must be composed of two or more sets of people or groups who occupy divergent positions in the social structure. Each set contained in the study must reflect a distinct homogeneous strain. (This condition, while not difficult to satisfy proved to be somewhat bothersome to scientifically demonstrate. Many of the co-ordinates used to locate 'position' in the social structure were those of an abstract nature. A brief discussion of this problem follows later.)

2. The parties are coerced into the relationship by certain conditions emanating from the social structure.

3. These conditions are contingent on social or economic rewards or penalties only.

4. The union is not purely a voluntary one in the sense that there are no more choices available to the member-occupants within limitations of logistics and economics.

5. The penalties imposed by the union do not outweigh the penalties contained within the options.

6. The aims of each set may or may not be the same. Methods, operating at random, will surely reflect that custom. The ideal condition would be one in which one of the sets knew very little about the means, and one in which the general aims support a common theme. Both parents and teachers would totally embrace: "Children in their formative years require training and education to prepare them for adult life and a suitable career." The manifold antecedents would vary as each set, subject to group introversion, would define and qualify such variables as: "children, formative years, training and education, and prepare."

The other condition that may be in operation would be 'agreement in principle' - Each group hoping, as in any marriage, to be able to guide the direction of the other, after the ceremony. These conditions are slightly solvent,

and may vary from group to group. One thing must be definite however, that a coalition has been established with reciprocal arrangements. Each group must find it necessary to draw on the resources of the other, because it lacks one or more essentials to complete its aims. These essentials would include: Physical Area (buildings, offices, etc.), Manpower, Time, Skills, Qualifications and Techniques, Accessibility to resources or a problem area, and Finances.

SELECTION OF THE STUDY GROUP

In keeping with the six prerequisites listed above I selected as my study group a Drug Crisis Intervention Centre. The organization was composed of two distinct bodies separated by management. The administration of the project was executed by a Board of Governors selected by, and from, the two Service Clubs that piloted the organization. These governors were chosen from the senior members of the two Service Clubs. These governors were men who represented the business and professional segment of the city. A sample of the officers included a veterinary surgeon, a civil engineer, a chartered accountant,

and the manager of a commercial business.

The physical operation of the project was carried out by a staff largely chosen from the ranks of the city's university students. This student group (almost a misnomer for some of the staff were not students while others had since dropped-out from college) belonged to a sector of society that fringed on what could be assigned deviant status. They were all people who had at one time or another participated in the usage of illegal drugs. The extent of involvement in this sub-culture varied with the individual. Some of these people had experimented abstemiously, some had been treated medically, some had been indicted and convicted for violations of the Narcotics Control Act, some more had been tried but found not guilty by the due process of law, some continued to use and traffic in illegal drugs during their tenure as counsellors.

The staff workers were chosen because of their familiarity with contraband drugs and their users. They were nonprofessional workers whose only qualification was the knowledge gleaned from 'street experience.' Professional legal and medical personnel were beyond the precincts of the Service Clubs' finances. The staff workers had no choice but to accept their employers and their

ideas, in the initial arrangement as both finances and premises were under the control of the Board of Governors. (When the Federal Government assumed the greater part of the financial responsibility the staff members actually engaged in action to have the Board of Governors completely replaced by people from the community who were non-members of the Service Clubs concerned).

The Board of Governors continued to operate the centre even though they had serious doubts about the reliability of the staff simply because it was a project of a type that was being sponsored nationally by their fellow organizations. The work of the project received extensive coverage and the Service Clubs enjoyed this publicity. If employees became especially troublesome they were weeded out. The staff continued to work with an unpopular Board of Governors mainly because of the financial benefits. The potential employers that would offer such salaries for "awareness of illegal drug practices" are severely limited.

Both the Governors and the staff genuinely felt that the "Conditions leading to and resulting from drug abuse, require serious attention." However there were quite differing opinions expressed on such essential

topics as:

- (a) What constitutes drug abuse?
- (b) Definitions of dangerous drugs.
- (c) Legal and moral implications associated with drug usage.
- (d) The nature of the programs to be under the sponsorship of the centre.
- (e) The type of client to be treated.
- (f) The type of crisis worker required.
- (g) Areas within the jurisdiction and competence of the organization.
- (h) The relationship of the centre to other social organizations.
- (i) The personnel most qualified to conduct the actual administration of the project.

I have tried to show in the above paragraphs a satisfying of the six pre-conditions that I listed in the section titled DEFINITION OF THE STUDY GROUP.

THE HISTORY OF THE STUDY GROUP

The project began in the early spring of 1971. Due to the unpopular nature of the subject of drug abuse the matutinal proposed locations met with hostility from the local residents. While business, professions, and community

all agreed with the principle of erecting a drug crisis centre, none expressed the desire to have it located anywhere close to his premises. The following excerpts are quoted from the city's newspapers respectively. They deal with the business of City Council as it considers requests for locations, over a three week period.

Under the headline Council Again Defers Decision On Drug Treatment Centre the staff reporter quotes the following statements:

The Clinic "would increase traffic congestion and result in a devaluation of property...would attract people who would 'cause embarrassment to the residents of the area as well as to themselves.' The residents of the area point out that there are number of schools and churches in the area. Residents emphasized that they support the club in its endeavour to open such a 'much needed clinic' and are willing to help and donate to the cause. Their objection is to its being set up in a residential area." 'We deplore having drug users and addicts and one thing or another frequent this area on a 24-hour basis.'

A Service Club spokesman said the club will 'sit tight and wait until a decision is made.' He indicated the club has no intention at the moment of withdrawing its application, as was done earlier when residents of the area around 318 LeMarchant Road objected when the club applied for permission to set up operations there. Opposition Leader A.J. Murphy, who resides at 72 LeMarchant Road came in for some harsh criticism from council. Mr. Murphy, in a letter bearing the Leader of the Opposition letterhead and signed as Opposition Leader, supported the residents and asked what the reaction would be if the same project was established in areas in which members of council

resided." — The Evening Telegram, April 22, 1971, page 3.

The following week a formal petition is drawn up and presented to the City Council. The report, headlined by Petition Drawn Up Portesting Proposed Drug Crisis Centre, included the following points.

"Residents in the immediate area of a proposed drug crisis centre have drawn up a petition objecting to the establishment of such a centre, which is presently before council, on LeMarchant Road. A spokesman for the residents told the NEWS Monday that approximately 75 residents of the area have signed the petition...

The residents believe that it should not be located in a residential area. It should be located in a commercial area or outside the city limits, such as in vacant rooms at the Sanatorium on Topsail Road or at a separate clinic in the Hospital for Mental and Nervous Diseases.

The spokesman for the group said that the petition has been signed by people from all walks of life, politicians, lawyers, widows and invalids, who object to the use of the building as a clinic. The matter came before council at last week's meeting and was deferred until opinion of residents of the area could be obtained this week." — Daily News, April 27, 1971, page 3.

The Evening Telegram ran the same story adding that the densely populated area contained, "families, many widows and retired people who only request peace and quiet." April 27, page 3.

The bill came before the City Council again and once again the councillors were unready to make a decision on

the location. The result was another postponement. Under the headline Drug Clinic Matter Deferred Again one of the members explained exactly how serious some of the residents considered this incident.

"Councillor Andrews stated there was no need for being hasty, and that the 70-odd families living in the immediate area must be taken into consideration. He pointed out that some of the families had expressed the view that, if the use of the building at 92 LeMarchant Road as a clinic was approved, they would sell their homes and move." — The Evening Telegram, April 29, 1971, page 3.

The matter came to a quick settlement on the following week. The headline Proposed Site of Drug Clinic Rejected ran the following details.

"Council has rejected an application by the Service Club of St. John's for the establishment of a drug crisis clinic at 92 LeMarchant Road. At its regular weekly meeting the council was unanimously refusing establishment of the clinic after hearing the opinion of city solicitor William Lang, on whether or not the council had discretionary powers in the matter if the clinic came up to standards. The matter had been deferred for one week when it first came before council two weeks ago so that opinion of the residents of the area could be obtained." — Daily News, May 6, 1971, page 2.

The centre was located in 1971 and relocated in 1972. These latter premises proved to be permanent as far as that the operation is still functioning as of the writing of this paper, April 1974. During this period the centre has

been restructured on a number of occasions. There have been two complete changes in the Board of Governors, three different Executive-Directors, and a slate of employees that would approximate one hundred. The organization has been financed by two distinct Federal government departments, and/or other subsidies and grants. The individual departments, and correspondingly the focus of the centre, have undergone at least two major developments.

I have recorded in the Appendix sections of a paper outlining the "Historical Origins and Proposed Structure" of the centre. This paper was prepared by the second Executive-Director in conference with his staff, for presentation to a Federal Government Directorate in September, 1972. It was not intended primarily as a historical account but I offer it here because it is one of the very few written documents available in the records. It is, like many similar historical accounts, little more than a sketch, drafted from memory, quite some months after the project's inception.

(1) Selltiz, Jahoda, Deutsch, Cook., Research Methods in Social Relation.

(2) Ibid., pp. 66, 67.

CHAPTER III

STUDYING THE CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTRE

METHODS OF GATHERING DATA

After the initial examination of the subject area, to determine the extent of its similarity to the hypothetical model that I had contrived, I turned my attention to the problems of gathering data. The very essence of the study dictated that the data be collected by direct observation. It was not possible to obtain the data required through structured methods such as formal interviews or questionnaires mainly because the individual participants in the study group were unaware of the phenomena under study. To alert them would be to destroy the purpose of the study. (I was very concerned throughout the study with the opinions of the individual counsellors with reference to the actual operation as opposed to the theoretical operation. I sometimes inquired of individual counsellors as to their ideas on the subject. The consensus of opinion could be paraphrased in the monogitation, "What do those people the external administrators know about what goes on down here at the centre? — Nothing!").

It was neither possible to create a controlled setting, nor was it necessary, I had found a natural study

area and all that remained was for me to gain access to it.

Participant observation is not necessarily confined to a single field technique. McCall and Simmons (1969) describe it as a style of research. It can, and often does, involve a composite of techniques that include informal and some formal interviewing, direct observation of relevant events, some systematic counting, and analysis of documents and records.

At this point in time I felt prepared to tackle the assignment. Some ideas were very clear in my mind, others were not.

The phenomena that I wished to study was a process. This process could only be examined as it unfolded over a period of time, and as it related to a series of different events that may or may not be related.

I was primarily interested in an investigation of the social structure en fonction not the separate or collective actions of the individuals of the organizational set.

I would be committed to a study that would require an extensive investment of time, in terms of both amplitude and duration.

- (i) The nature of the project demanded that a daily routine be established so that I would be in contact with the natural order and movement of the centre.
- (ii) The validity of the study depended on a significant contingent. Elementary social structures are only as enduring, relatively speaking, as their engineers. A major change in personnel, (there had been two such transitions up to this point), or a relocation of the premises (one had occurred), could contaminate the data to an extent that would render it valueless.

The present corporate system had just been set in motion, I would be with this system's structure then, from its very commencement.⁽¹⁾ This new regime was to continue in operation for a minimum period of six months, and I planned my study period accordingly. In actual fact both of "us" were to remain longer.

HISTORY OF THE PRESENT INQUIRY

The following material was gathered almost exclusively by direct observation and informal interviewing. I confined formal interviewing to the two staff members that knew that I was researching a paper; the Executive-Director, and the Co-ordinator for Crisis Intervention. I did not however, divulge the nature of the study, or the topic, to them. This is not to state that documents and records received cursory attention, for the

exact opposite is true. I spent considerable amounts of time in analysis of the records, but the yield proved to be of minor consequence only.

By the middle of August, 1972, I was prepared to begin the study. I was fortunate to find that the present position of Executive-Director was occupied by a person who had been a former alumnus and an old-time friend. His academic background included a major in Sociology. (He had started to do graduate work in the same field but withdrew without completing his dissertation for reasons that remain personal). For these reasons the question of access never became a problem for me, he gave me his full permission to complete my work during his term. In spite of this early welcome, I was not to begin my observation period for at least another six weeks. In anticipation, of the favourable consideration (by the Federal government) of a request for extensive financing, the Executive-Director had begun to restructure the operation. Both he and I felt that it was in my best interest to wait until a definite reply had been given to this request.

During some of October and all of November (the grant had been approved by now) I carried on what best may be described as 'casual observation'. I had been introduced to the staff by the Executive-Director (the only full-time

✓

salaried administrator) as a personal friend of his. A few weeks later I had been accepted by the Co-ordinator for Crisis Intervention, as a volunteer worker. These two steps were taken in accordance with the proposals of Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean (1967) who advise the field worker to gain acceptance by moving from the top down to the actual participants in the field situation; and Blalock (1970) who states that the basic prerequisite of participant observation is to gain confidence so as not to change the behaviour observed. I was now able to justify my presence at the centre during the day and evening shifts both. It was during the former that the business activity of the centre was conducted and during the latter that most of the crisis intervention and counselling activity, happened to occur. It was fairly easy to drop by during the day on the pretext of seeing the Executive-Director and to remain waiting for him for a period of 30-35 minutes. I refer to this as the 'casual observation period' because at this time I was only interested in establishing congenial relations with the staff, and with familiarizing myself with the operation. During this stage I made no attempt to record data. This also is advised by Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean (1967). "The researcher should sacrifice initial data in order to

speed acceptance. He should therefore not be overly eager to collect crucial data, he should let circumstances carry him along. He should not give the impression that his only reason for being there is to collect data, but that he genuinely enjoys the informants' company and is interested in the activities of the group. He should avoid constant probing with questions - he is better advised to inject his comments or questions when the conversation naturally turns to his area of concern. Once he is accepted, he will have time to ask more direct questions, and while he waits he can win the informants' confidence, identify those having the most insight, and judge which question will be threatening.

In general, field work progresses from passive observation, to participation in group activities, to interviewing and, finally, to experimental intervention. Trying to move too quickly from one phase to the next can destroy good working relations and delay data collection." (2)

In late November of 1972 my role in the field situation changed. The Executive-Director offered me an office-job in the research branch of the organization. This work would take place over a six-month period. Within two weeks I was placed in charge of the branch with a staff of four and a secretary.

Junker (1952) and Gold (1958) list four theoretically possible roles for sociologists contemplating field work. Of these four my field situation came closest to Complete Participant. Gold characterizes this relationship of the worker to his study group in these terms: "The true identity and purposes of the complete participant in field research are not known to those whom he observes. He interacts with them as naturally as possible in whatever areas of their living interest him and are accessible to him as situations in which he can play, or learn to play, requisite day-to-day role successfully."⁽³⁾

I viewed this job, coming when it did, as nothing short of a deus ex machina, for it solved a variety of research problems that had been of concern to me in the latter few weeks.

First and foremost, it gave me immediate and incessant access to the complete operation. I was openly permitted to discuss matters with the staff, the internal administration and the external authority. I was able to speak with related agencies, I also secured numerous valuable contacts with the clients. I gained passageway to the back regions, and had a legitimate right to examine documents, records, statistics, and reports.

I was completely free to record any and all data, almost immediately. I kept a private file in my desk that contained information that was of value to me only. It was here that I kept my field notes. The operation functioned in an atmosphere of confidentiality. Never did any of the staff members question any of my field note-taking. On a few occasions a few of the regular clients passed comments:- "He's always writing something". This sort of comment was easily answered with, "Oh, it's part of a report I'm working on..." It is of course extremely likely to be the case that the client was casually making conversation, in these instances. At any rate, that was the extent of the inquiries that I received.

I was at liberty to carry personal papers and documents to my home after conventional working hours. I made it a point to include my field notes in these papers every three or four days.

In order to gather information on the conduct of the staff after the 'business section' of the centre had closed for the day, I pretended to work a few hours overtime. At times I would continue on, eating a light supper at the premises, from the day shift. At others I would return to the centre between seven and eight in the evening. This

device served a dual purpose. It gave me extra time at the centre during a period when I could not otherwise justify my presence. (It would appear slightly odd for a staff worker to be so devoted so as to volunteer for a shift so soon after his previous one.) It enabled me to catch up on my assigned duties or to work ahead, either way, I was gaining my time that could be spent in the field.

In addition to this and my assigned office hours (they were slightly flexible but usually 8-5) I found it prudent to complete volunteer shifts, both evening and night. I also worked shifts as a fill-in for regular workers who were ill or away, or assisted when the work load was burdensome.

The duties of my position, under the broad description of statistical researcher, were ones that required only a little attention. The work to be done was routine and repetitious. Since the demands of my office were few (I had of course inquired about this before I accepted the position, the Executive-Director had assured me that I would be able to do my job and still have ample time left for research purposes), I was at liberty to take advantage of these 'extra hours' and with the approval of

the Co-ordinator for Crisis Intervention and the Executive-Director, I became a temporary crisis worker and counsellor. I usually spent a minimum of 15-20 hr./week in this capacity:

I found these evening and night shifts especially productive. During these periods there were often 'slow hours' that furnished opportunities for informal interviewing and general conversation, free from external and internal interruption.

My position as Co-ordinator of Research gave me a 'passport' to most of the internal meetings. I never participated actively because the business at hand rarely had any connection with my section of the organization. I was left with valuable time to analyse conversation and sift through events.

Although I have chosen to describe my field situation as complete participant, my actual conduct also included what Gold terms Participant-as-observer. In strict definitive terms my relationship to the study group was that of branch colleague who occasionally helped out in other departments. It is necessary then to discuss the potential drawbacks that are associated with each of these field circumstances.

Becker and Greer (1957) advise the field worker to

become familiar with the natural argot of his study set. The time that I had spent in casual observation clearly demonstrated to me the value of this advice. There were many open references, asides, and explanations made that were cloaked in group jargon. With the assistance of the workers I gradually became accustomed to the style, and assured myself that I was indeed one of the group. It was almost a month after I had started note-taking that the error of assumption became poignantly evident.

"I had taken a phone call from a lady who had been referred to quite often as (Mrs.) Carol Downer. As I passed the phone to the Director I happened to remark, "It's Mrs. Downer". He seemed slightly annoyed at me at the time but continued the call. When it was completed I inquired as to my trespass. He smiled as he explained to me that the lady's real name was Smith. The staff had dubbed her with the sobriquet 'Downer' because of her fondness for tranquillizing and sedating agents".

It was after this significant experience that I took extra care to examine any and all unfamiliar terms. I reconsidered all of the clients' names to check for any similar homology.

Gold (1958), in his discussion of the implications of role-pretense in Complete participation field work, identifies two associated problems. First the participant may become self-conscious about revealing his true

self to the extent that he handicaps himself in the pretended role and appears unconvincing. Second, he may go native, incorporate the role into his self conception and thus achieve self-expression in the role.

Neither of these potential dangers emerged as a serious jeopardy to the field study. The first one had certainly posed a problem for me in the early fall months. I was then operating under the guise of volunteer worker and felt some strain in attempting to play this role convincingly. After I accepted the job as Research Coordinator I found it considerably easier to carry out my field work. I was no longer under pressure to assume, I was able to conduct my daily affairs as a bona fide staff member.

The second potential problem causes some hindrance to all field workers. Gold's advice to participants is to take "cooling off periods" so that one is able to look back upon one's field behaviour dispassionately and sociologically. In my particular instance I was protected somewhat from the hazards of 'going native' not because of any inherent quality in the self, but because of the nature of the study. I was primarily interested in the

social structure as a composition, and only slightly concerned with the methods used by individuals to cope with their many and varied problems. I was disinterested with 'point of view' except as it related to a possible source of conflict. Secondly, crisis work has what I would term a "built-in safety valve" that helps the maintenance of professional distance. The demands made of the individual crisis worker, many of which he is unable to satisfy, culminate into a build-up of pressure and frustration until it reaches a saturation point. This type of work is by essence, that which immerses performers in a quagmire of social exactions. Because of the nature and number of the problems weighing on the worker, and because he lacks essential professional training, he may reach his point of fatigue in a matter of months. When the worker approaches this point there is a limited number of options open to him.

- (i) He may continue to carry out his duties but in a perfunctory manner only.
- (ii) He may agitate for a small vacation or a leave of absence.
- (iii) He might resign his position.

This is an area that has potential for further research, I mention it only briefly here in the context of my above argument.

Even with these safeguards working to my advantage, my field methods weren't exemplary. I had been in the field for a little under two months, when an occasion occurred in which I forwarded my 'expert' opinion. The Co-ordinator for Crisis Intervention, who was present, remained reticent. However in a private conversation a few hours later she began a mordantacious rebuttal.

"You reminded me of a complete and utter novice today, they come here full of energy and enthusiasm, work for a few weeks and think they have all the answers, know all the solutions, I've seen them come and go and they are 'all the same.'"

I accepted this admonition as legitimate criticism and decided to reorganize my methods. For the following two weeks I participated as little as possible in the affairs of the centre. I spent some time going back over my field notes giving extra consideration to the recently collected material. I kept a close watch for any change or slant that might have seeped into this section of my study. Throughout the remainder of my observation period the measure of that conversation stuck with me.

Gold also specifies the tendency of an observer to spend more time and energy participating than observing, as a potential springe that often ensnares the unwary

researcher. The fact that this usually happens is of course not the issue, rather it is the extent that a field worker becomes absorbed in his participation, that faults the study. I did not find involvement circumstances to interfere to any degree. First I was not a crisis worker, neither was I considered so by the staff or myself. In the second instance it was only possible to become involved as one when there was a sufficient work overload. It would not be in good form (from any point of view) for the surrogate to assume the duties of a regular staff worker. Thirdly, a percentage of the calls required only a minimum of effort for commensurate disposition. It would be difficult to become involved readily, in duties so marked by brevity. Fourthly, the majority of calls received were from long-term clients. Each crisis-worker was involved in an equitable portion of these complex cases. While casework was often open to intramural witness, a crisis worker would not attempt to actively treat the client of a colleague. This was a general lesson that came to my attention early in the study, and one of which I took particular note.

Morris Zelditch, (Jr.) (1962) attempts to prepare the inexperienced field worker for the inevitable short-

comings that his field work will suffer. "There has never been a participant-observer study in which the observer acquired full knowledge of all roles and statuses through his own direct observation, and for that matter there never will be such a study by a single observer." (4)

During the time that I spent in the field there was only one disappointment of a major nature that I was forced to face. There were regular bimonthly meetings between the Executive-Director and his Board of Governors. It was at these meetings that important social interaction and discourse took place. The policy and philosophy of the centre were formed here, all of the disputes were brought to this table, the general business of operating the centre settled and the financial accounts decided.

I tried on numerous occasions to persuade the Executive-Director to allow me to accompany him. Although I invented a number, and variety of pretexts they all proved to be nugatory. On this point the Director stood firm. Fortunately I was given access to the written minutes of these meetings and they proved to be a valuable substitute.

During the research period in excess of 1300 hours were spent in the field. I say in excess because numerous

fragments of hours were spent in observation before and after the definite observation section. I also spent numerous hours on speaking tours, touring other institutions, and working in centre related activities, that I find difficult to compute in man-hours. Of the total approximate figure that I have chosen, 1300, a minimum of 500 hours were devoted to research practices.

More day shifts were observed simply because there was more technical business being conducted in the day. It was at this time that orders were discussed, strategy planned, reports prepared, liaisons cemented or broken, in short, the organizational framework was exposed like an open book. Nevertheless, all three shifts received enough attention so that I was able to typify the corresponding patterns of behaviour, respective to each.

The concentrated observation was carried out between October, 1972 and May, 1973. I kept in touch with the centre throughout the summer months of 1973, visiting a couple of times a week. These ranged in duration from 30 minutes to 3 hours or more. In early September I spent a final week in fairly intensive refreshment. I worked four, full, 12-hour shifts as a crisis worker.

This completed my field survey and I began to organize my material.

During the writing of this paper I found it necessary to recheck certain points. The original Executive-Director had resigned his position in June, 1973 to return to his academic studies. A new Executive-Director was appointed from the former crisis workers, by a new Board of Governors. I maintained liaison with him and he also allowed me some latitude in the examination of reports and documents.

I maintained written communication with the Coordinator for Crisis Intervention, who had also left her position at the centre. She had in her possession an excellent set of personal notes and she was most cooperative in supplying me with missing details.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

I have chosen to work within the framework of a theory of the middle range for reasons that will become obvious as this section continues.

Robert Merton's Role Set-Theory (1957, 1958, 1959, 1961) furnishes an ideal framework for the analysis of

such questions as those that are of concern to me. His work in Role Set-Theory has led him to hypothesize that social structures sustain a number of social operatives which function to produce a greater degree of order within the system than would be afforded, were these operatives not in action. He isolates and discusses six of these mechanisms in order to exemplify his analytical process. It is mainly through the broad examination of each of these that I put Merton's theory to test.

In the preface to his discussion on The Role-Set Merton (1957) pays full respect to major comprehensive sociological theory. He sees however the necessity to examine ideas within ideas, and issues some convincing arguments for theories of the middle range.

"Apart from such general theory, there have been developing theories, also analytical and systematic, of far more limited scope, these involving sets of ideas which can be described as theories of middle range — theories, for example, of reference groups and social mobility, of communication, role-conflict and the formation of social norms. These theories also involve abstractions, of course, but abstractions not so far removed from the data of sociological observation.

The principal basis of advancing sociological theory today consists, I believe, in much the same modest and limited development of ideas which occurred in the early

modern period of other sciences, from natural history to chemistry and physics. Such theories of the middle range consist of sets of relatively simple ideas, which link together a limited number of facts about the structure and functions of social formations and suggest further observations. They are theories intermediate to comprehensive analytical schemes and detailed workaday hypotheses. The conception of this type of theory is of course not new: there are allusions to it in Plato; Bacon made much of 'intermediate or middle axioms' as did John Stuart Mill. But it seems to me particularly important to emphasize the distinctive value of such limited theories in a science, such as ours, in which concepts and classification play such a major part, whereas few or no quantitative laws have yet been discovered.

In emphasizing what seems to me the distinctive importance of theories of the middle range, I would prefer not to be misunderstood. There is of course, no contradiction between such theories and more comprehensive theory, such as that advanced by Parsons. Nor am I suggesting that only theories of the middle range merit our attention. After all sociology is a large house of many mansions. Moreover in intellectual work as in manual work, most of us have a way of finding certain activities congenial, and it would be self-deceiving to assume that our tastes play no part in the kind of theoretical work we prefer to do. To project our 'temperamental' bents into a general imperative may be tempting but nonetheless ill-considered. There is no substitute for such efforts as Parsons' to develop a wide-ranging and comprehensive theory of the social system as a whole, which will incorporate, with successive modifications, more highly delimited theories. But, by the same token there is room also

for another kind of theorizing which is, at the outset, and for some time to come, limited to more restricted ranges of phenomena than those encompassed by a system of thought like that of Parsons. The two kinds of inquiry can usefully follow their own course, with periodic reconnaissance to see to what extent specific theories of a limited range of phenomena are found to be consistent with the theory of larger scope. On this view the consolidation of delimited theories in sociology largely comes about through successive convergence of initially disparate ideas, convergences of the kind which Parsons himself worked out in analysing the work of Weber and Durkheim, Marshall and Pareto." (5)

There are five important points that must be kept in mind in the appreciation of Merton's argument. That such theories are not meant as replacement for comprehensive theory. That no suggestion is made of exclusivity for such theories. Theories of the middle range are theories about a delimited range of social phenomena. These ideas give rise to a limited number of inferences about the phenomena in question. The consolidation of delimited theories in sociology largely comes about through successive convergence of initially disparate ideas.

To illustrate his case Merton decides not to consider sociological theories in general but to "...examine one small example in the hope that it will exhibit the design of one kind of structural and functional analysis." (6)

Adopting the basic contemporary premise that social statuses and social roles comprise major building blocks of social structure, Merton expands on Ralph Linton's concepts of status and role:

"By status Linton meant a position in a social system involving designated rights and obligations; by role, the behaviour oriented to these patterned conduct and relationships which make up a social structure. Linton went on to state the long recognized and basic fact that each person in society inevitably occupies multiple statuses and that each of these statuses has an associated role.

It is at this point that I find it useful to depart from Linton's conception. The difference is initially a small one, some might say so small as not to deserve notice, but it involves a shift in the angle of vision which leads, I believe, to successively greater differences of a fundamental kind. Unlike Linton, I begin with the premise that each social status involves not a single associated role, but an array of roles. This basic feature of the social structure can be registered by the distinctive but not formidable term, role-set. To repeat, then, by rôle-set I mean that complement of role-relations in which persons are involved by virtue of occupying a particular social status. Thus, in our current studies of medical schools, we have begun with the view that the status of medical student entails not only the role of a student vis-a-vis his teachers, but also an array of other roles relating him diversely to other students, physicians, nurses, social workers, medical technicians, and the like. Again the status of school teacher in the United States has its distinctive rôle-set, in which are found pupils, colleagues, the school principal and superintendent, the Board of Education, professional associations, and on occasion, local patriotic organizations." (7)

In summation, I would like to specify exactly why I feel that a theory of the middle range would best be used in a localized study such as mine.

First, the phenomena under study is an organism, complete in itself, with its own distinctive set of relationships that blend into a particular structure.

Secondly, the scope of this particular study concerns a given circumscribed area.

Thirdly, the organic matter under focus will yield a specific number of deductions only.

All of this is to say that in this particular question we are dealing with a delimited range of social phenomena, that therefore does not lend itself to examination in terms of a major comprehensive theory.

Conversely, we are not concerned with the dynamics of individual interaction.

In the study undertaken we are interested primarily in the structural conditions of the operation and how groups or sets of people behave within the relationship. Development of roles, adaptation to roles, and the management of the conflicting demands made on the individual are not of significance.

It is the typical, not the atypical that is held open for inspection, for this reason micro-sociological theory does not suit our purpose.

(1) It was no coincidence that I began my study at this point in time. I was in fact, prepared to start some seven weeks earlier. However the advice given by the Executive-Director was to wait until the restructuring was complete. During the waiting period I confined my activity to brief visits that would have averaged three a week. I became familiar with the history of the organization, met some of the staff members, and tried to focus on the work that was being carried on in the centre.

(2) Dean, Eichhorn, and Dean., An Introduction to Social Research. John T. Doby (ed.) 1967, page 283.

(3) Raymond L. Gold, "Roles in Sociological Field Observations." Social Forces, (1958). 36. pp. 217-23.

(4) Morris Zelditch, Jr., "Some Methodological Problems of Field Studies." American Journal of Sociology, (1962), 67, page 572.

(5) Robert K. Merton, "The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," British Journal of Sociology. (1957), pp. 108-9.

(6) Ibid., pp. 110-111.

(7) Ibid., pp. 110-111.

CHAPTER IV

THE ROLE-SET

THE CRISIS WORKER - STATUS-OCCUPANT

In the study to be presented, the role-set is composed of nine major elements. The first of these and the status-occupant of the study is a non-professional counsellor or worker in a community street clinic. The purpose of the clinic was mainly to deal with problems associated with non-medical drug usage on a minor scale. No specific training was required; however, the worker was expected to have a good general knowledge of such matters as: 1) the types of street drugs available; 2) the forms they appeared in; 3) the effects created by their use with reference to dosage, variety of drug, and multiple drug usage; 4) the general and abnormal states induced by drugs; 5) physical and mental effects of various drugs on persons of differing temperaments; 6) viable methods of dealing with crisis and non-crisis situations; 7) modes of dealing with police, hospitals, parents, professionals, schools, and others who may be involved in a particular case or campaign; 8) an ability to relate to people whose life style is criminal or deviant; 9) some knowledge of the street traffic with

reference to common toxic substances, unsafe practices, and lethal or noxious combinations. In sum, the crisis centre workers were people who had a fairly thorough knowledge of illegal drugs and illegal drug-taking practices. Such knowledge was gleaned from first-hand experience either by consumption of drugs or by association with individuals or groups who were using or had used drugs on a regular basis. The number of permanent counsellors fluctuated but during this study the most common number was seven. These counsellors worked regular shift duties 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The majority of the counsellors were not native Newfoundlanders, coming from either the United States, or other provinces in Canada. The staff was composed of equal numbers of men and women, this balance being intentional and fairly consistently maintained. All of the counsellors fell within the age grouping 20-29. The occupation was classed by the general terms counsellor and crisis worker and the salary range was \$6000-\$6500 per annum. The positions required no formal training but all of the workers had had some related experience. It was often but not always the case that the crisis worker had served

for some time as a volunteer with the crisis staff, gathering knowledge from those who were now his colleagues. Ironically, most people who had trained in social welfare were viewed by the staff as unsuited to the job. This feeling which permeated all sections of the undertaking was based on a general dislike for professional 'do gooders' and the pseudo-liberal attitudes they espoused. While the staff and co-ordinators were not exactly sure what they expected of a fellow-worker, they were very definite about what they did not want. Approximately three-quarters of the crisis staff had some university education, but none held a certificate or degree. No one on the staff was married or gave any other indications of permanent settlement or pursuit of a chosen career. They viewed this experience as a job that they would move on from, back to university full time, another position in a related or an unrelated field, or activity of a personal nature. The crisis staff had a consistent turnover in personnel as workers rarely remained at the centre for periods in excess of nine months.

THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors consisted of a select committee elected from the ranks of the general membership of the Service Organization. Those represented were senior members, chosen because they had already demonstrated the ability to provide able management in other projects initiated by the organization. This undertaking was one of the larger and more intricate enterprises under their aegis. The fact that it would function on a long-term basis and possibly become a permanent venture made it necessary to enlist the most able officers at the outset.

The officers of the Board of Governors were members of the business and/or professional sector of the community. Their exact positions were unknown and it is also not possible to report accurately their salaries and general income; however, it may be stated that to all appearances these were men of at least mild affluence. (When the question of raising a mortgage on the building housing the project arose these officers were able to loan the organization substantial funds from their personal

bank accounts. (1) This board was composed entirely of men married with families, with an age range of forty to fifty-five. As with their salaries, educational qualifications must be approximated, by virtue of the fact that they held managerial and executive positions in the different companies that employed them, one can tentatively assume that they had professional degrees or their equivalents. As a formal group they met every other week, spending some of the meeting with the Executive-Director and holding the remainder in camera. They did not receive any salary or gratuity for their one year term in office. They were responsible to the quorum of the Service Organization for all phases of the project. They hired all of the staff, usually on the recommendation of the Director, kept accounts and paid wages; they decided on policy, type of programs to be sponsored, the general operation of the system, and public relations. It was made expressly clear that they would demand final authority and absolute control over all facets of the project. (When the Director committed an infraction of a minor nature, involving the funds of the project, the board reacted by recalling his key to the centre's mailbox, a privilege he was never to

regain. All mail was then filtered by the board, a tedious and irritating process for the staff. If the Director was untrustworthy and irresponsible, why not dismiss him? If he was not, why continue with such demeaning and unnecessary treatment?)

Although the individual members of the Board of Governors had only limited contact with the rank and file crisis workers, their impact on the centre in general and the workers in particular, was the single most important force influencing the operation.

THE EXECUTIVE-DIRECTOR

The Executive-Director was the liaison between the Board of Governors, and all of the staff workers in the Centre. He was directly responsible for the physical management of the operation. It was his task to organize and synthesize the individual elements of the project; implement the policies of the Board; devise a good publicity campaign to be directed towards the media, the schools and educational institutions, church groups, and other similar and related action groups; design representative programs to be sponsored by the centre on its own.

initiative, or in conjunction with other agencies, project and supervise research activity; prepare reports from the data supplied by the various branches; and maintain an awareness of the day-to-day operations in terms of the long term goals of the organization. His official office hours were designated from 9 to 5, Monday through Friday. It is readily apparent from the outline above that the Director must apply his energies at frequent intervals, not contained within his inventory. These demands were manifold, sometimes acute, sometimes trifling, but always time-consuming.

The Director managing the centre during my observation period had been the second such incumbent. He was an unmarried male aged between 25-30. He had attended and completed a minimum of five years university training, had previously been employed as a high-school teacher, and a crisis worker in that same organization. Soon after his promotion to Executive-Director he had reorganized both the institutional structure, and the manner of financing the project, establishing the network which remained unchanged during the eight month observation period. In addition to his salary of \$8000 per annum, he received an in-town apartment gratis.

THE CO-ORDINATOR OF CRISIS INTERVENTION

The Co-Ordinator of Crisis Intervention was a single female in the age range of 21-25. She had some university training but had not yet completed a degree program. She had experience as a crisis worker on three previous occasions, the latter one with this present organization. Her salary was approximately \$7500 per annum.

Although it was unofficial she was inclined to work irregular hours — sometimes at the centre, sometimes outside. Like the Director she found it necessary to work to a capacity defined by the work load, not her contract. In addition to her normal duties she spent extra time as a crisis worker and counsellor. There were several long term clients who had been treated by her when she was a case worker — these she retained after her move upward in the structure, (or perhaps, more accurately, they retained her). It is difficult to assess her contribution to the project as a whole, for her momentum alone permeated and seemed to 'carry' numerous undertakings of the centre. When individual workers were ill or away she would complete their shift; when the centre became unusually busy she would drop by to assist; when exceptionally cumbersome tasks arose she would not hesitate to tackle them.

Although she expended her energies throughout the project as a whole, it was her perseverance with the crisis centre that established it as the efficient unit that it was.

Her defined job consisted of drawing up schedules and shifts; running a check on the individual call sheets which were kept on all visits and calls (from these she would prepare monthly progress reports for the Board of Governors, the Board of Advisors, and the public media); co-ordinating all of the activities of the crisis centre; training new employees and volunteers; working actively with associated agencies and professionals; making new contacts or cementing relations with already established ones. As was the case with the Director, she was in demand as a qualified speaker as a guest at luncheons, for media interviews, as lecturer, and as a panelist at discussions. As she had worked with the centre since it had first opened its doors to the public, she was well acquainted with all of the regular clients and a large percentage of the occasional callers. She had personally selected the people who worked under her, primarily on intuitive judgement.

THE ASSOCIATE DEPARTMENTS

In addition to the crisis centre there were four other departments that functioned within the project. These departments, Enabling Services (an employment agency for difficult placements), Learning Transfer (a methods and skills co-operative), Social Services, and Research accounted for a staff of nine. The first three sections were composed of a single co-ordinator each. There were six males and three females in the age group 25-35. At least half of these people had completed a university degree. Some of the salaries were negotiated while the remainder were on contract. The little contact that they had with the crisis worker came about through the normal business channels; referral of client from one unit to another, personal briefing on the status of clients, and group judgements on individual cases. This routine inter-office communication occurred only during the day shift as all of the people working in these departments used the standard business hours of 9-5. While the collaboration of departments was common, it was usually the case that such operations were handled by the respective co-ordinators rather than the individual staff.

worker. For this reason these indirect colleagues did not play a large part as role-partners in the role-set.

COMMUNITY COLLEAGUES

One of the most important services rendered the community by the project was that of referral. The client would approach the centre and explain his situation to a crisis worker. The crisis worker would analyze the problem and suggest possible approaches and solutions. The worker would also make the necessary arrangements for contact, briefing the receiving agency on the history of the subject. It was one of the major accomplishments of the centre that a referral bank with a roster of 70 individual agencies and institutions was established. In each of these at least one individual would be considered the contact person, that one being one who had been approached and found to be sympathetic to the aims of the crisis centre. The counsellors and these contacts were on a first-name basis. This network included all sorts of associations, institutions, service groups, centres, agencies, societies, organizations, councils, clubs, clinics, hospitals and offices, bureaus and departments, run by professionals, volunteers, private

citizens and governments dealing with matters pertaining to economics, education, correctional rehabilitation, welfare, health, and law. It would be an enormous task to describe these members of the role-set even in general terms. It should be sufficient to say that the members of this group were, as much as possible, chosen with care for in the majority of the cases these people were the ones who followed up the clients' complaints.

THE NON-MEDICAL USE OF DRUGS DIRECTORATE

A large part of the operation was financed by a federal government department (Health and Welfare). The representative of this department was responsible for the correct financial and organization management of the project as their aims were strictly defined. The organizational offices were located in another province and only periodic visits were made to this city. These visits occurred every two or three months, and as only a little time was spent in observation their association with the staff was not extensive. During the stay, the representatives spent most of their time with the Director, passing on comments, suggestions, and criticisms to him.

VOLUNTEER WORKERS

Because of work overloads and occasional busy periods experienced by the centre, it was found necessary to accept volunteers. They worked along with staff on regular shifts. The interests and attitudes of the volunteers varied, some stayed for months, others only for a few shifts. As might be expected, certain sectors of the medical profession used the centre as part of their training, since the project offered an opportunity to obtain first-hand experience with users of non-medical drugs. Interns often helped to man the centre, as did nursing personnel. Young people with time on their hands volunteered aid because they considered it a worthwhile experience. Ex-addicts came along to provide first person narratives of their various experiences. Job-hopefuls were numerous; they arrived assuming that the experience gained (and/or interest shown) in the work of the centre, would advance the possibility of their being selected for employment should a position materialize. When the motives of these volunteers were genuine they were trusted and treated as part of the staff. However few of them were of high enough calibre to merit this distinction. When this was the case they were rarely

given tasks of a significant nature or encouraged to participate to any extent. The majority of the volunteers, for one reason or another rarely kept up regular shifts, or adhered to punctuality. They usually drifted away after a month or two having given little and gained less. Although the selection policy for these volunteers was fairly rigid, and acceptance came only after a lengthy interview, the constant demand for extra help sometimes lowered the standards. In spite of this demand a large number of those offering their services had to be turned down, simply because they were deemed by the staff and co-ordinator to be unsuitable. As one may expect the ranks of those rejects were filled by: the curiosity-seekers, various types of misfits and crackpots who had their personal philosophies as to the direction in which the earth should spin, people who enjoyed 'playing' social worker, and those who had some emotional or personality disorders themselves.

THE ADVISORY BOARD

Each of the four departments operating from the centre had long-range integrated goals, but differing

functions. The fifth department, the research arm of the organization, provided specific services to the other branches, but viewed its status as terminal. It was for this reason that the former all had professional advice at their disposal, while the latter exercised as self-governing unit. This professional advice was channeled through a section named the Board of Advisors. Each of these boards were composed of experts in their field of specialization. The average number of members on each was five. The specific function of each was two-fold: first, to devise schemes to be implemented over a period of six months that would fulfil the designated aims of the individual department, and second, to evaluate both the accomplishment of the respective department, and the merit of this accomplishment to the general community. Informally, individual members of the Board of Advisors were approached for immediate advice on routine problems, when they could be reached. The most successful contribution that the Board made the centre, was the instillation of 'professional methodology' in the repertoire of the staff and co-ordinators.

(1) For an account of this see page 125 of
Appendix A

CHAPTER V

THE POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT WITHIN THE ROLE-SET

Merton's theory of Role-Set predicts that a potential for conflict exists when the role-partners are drawn from diverse social statuses due directly to the different social values correspondingly embraced. In the study to be presented we have just such a conditional situation. A local chapter of an established charity and service organization undertakes a project to help in the alleviation of the medical and social problems arising from the abuse of those drugs deemed illegal by the Narcotics Control Act or the Food and Drug Act. This includes a broad set of chemicals ranging from the opiate derivatives to the organic hallucinogens. The very nature of the work demands that those people to be employed in such a venture must be chosen from a closed section of the population. This section was made up of people with a working knowledge of the drugs themselves and a familiarity with regular users. Only two categories seem to be able to fulfil these pre-requisites:

- (i) those people who have through their professional work had the opportunity to work with drug users, such as members of the medical profession, social workers who have gained experience working in areas where such drugs are prevalent, law officers

whose energies had been directed towards various offenders of the drug laws, and members of different religious denominations who had worked in this field.

- (ii) those people who have experimented with illegal drugs in the past, but no longer continue to do so; those people who have used and are still using illegal drugs; those people who have for one reason or another, been in association with groups of regular users.

A staff chosen from the former category would be preferable to the service organization, image alone, being a vital factor. However, as preferences are a poor substitute for resources, a compromise was necessary. While a professional worker (a clergyman), with adequate experience with street drugs was selected as the original Executive Director, his immediate staff worker was the university student seeking summer employment; or other young people who had been "around" for awhile. By the time I had begun the observation period at the centre, the original Director had left. He had recommended as his replacement a former staff worker, with senior experience. This new Director, in turn, chose his co-ordinators from his former co-workers. The result was that by the time that I arrived to observe at the centre, some fourteen months

had elapsed the enterprise was staffed and controlled completely by members from category two mentioned above. It seemed that the members in this category were in a very different social position from the board members.

Merton mentions four features which would indicate the extent of the gap in social position. He states:

"All this presupposes, of course, that there is always a potential for differing and sometimes conflicting expectations of the conduct appropriate to a status-occupant among those in the role-set. The basic source of this potential for conflict, I suggest - and here we are at one with theorists as disparate as Marx and Spencer, Simmel and Parsons - is that the members of the role-set are, to some degree apt to hold social positions differing from that of the occupant of the status in question. To the extent that they are diversely located in the social structure, they are apt to have interests and sentiments, values and moral expectations (the emphasis is mine) differing from those of the status-occupant himself. This, after all, is one of the principal assumptions of Marxist theory, as it is of all sociological theory: social differentiation generates distinct interests among those variously located in the structure of society." (1)

It is my intention to apply these characteristics to both the Board and the staff in an attempt to make a comparison between the conflicting attitudes held towards the centre and to delineate the social composition of each grouping.

INTERESTS - BUSINESS vs CALLER-CLIENTS

It was no coincidence that the interests of the staff came to clash again and again with the interests of the Board. The Board, as already stated, were professionally and business-oriented in their everyday occupational pursuits. It is understandable that they carried over into the project a modus operandi similar to their day to day one. While not losing sight of the objectives of the affair, the Board thought of the enterprise as a business venture first, and a charitable organization second. Whenever mention was made of expanding or upgrading services, the major concern was money. It was far better, in the eyes of the Board, to continue a second or third rate performance or discontinue that particular operation than to increase expenditure. For instance, the building was divided into three floors, the bottom floor of which was occupied by the crisis centre. This floor was unsightly in all respects. The ancient furniture was broken and torn; walls blistered with paint were crayoned with graffiti; inadequate lighting - both natural and artificial - contributed to the dingy, gloomy

atmosphere; the small offices were partitioned off with warped, thinly constructed plyboard. These conditions persisted for over a year before some arrangements were made for minor renovations, in spite of the complaints of the staff. After these arrangements were realized, it was discovered that some of the money allocated for expenses through the research grant had been siphoned off to pay for wallboard supplies.

As a rule there were no direct clashes between the Board and the clients; in fact when members were present during working hours, their conduct towards the clients was kind almost to the point of being patronizing. However it was made clear that the Board valued the physical assets involved in the organization above the people involved with it. The above example is only one of the ways that this type of was manifested. The comfort of the client, (and the staff), was indeed low on the list of priorities.

As may be expected, some of the clients were subject to states which involved loss of control over their actions and aberrant behavior. While such episodes were the exception and not the rule, circumstances did arise such that damage to the centre-premises was incurred. The response of the Board was identical in both cases, (even though the

slate of officers had changed in between the two). The first case I had not witnessed, but received the information second-hand. The second I witnessed myself.

CASE I

There arose a small spat between two girls, one Friday evening. The elder of the two was 17, and she had been visiting the centre regularly during the past year. The younger, aged 15, had just started to frequent the premises. This girl had been drinking; the older one had been using a multiplicity of drugs, the most recent being the hallucinogen MMDA. The counsellor in trying to settle the issue succeeded only in alienating the elder, who in a fit of anger overturned a few pieces of furniture and stalked out. As she exited she smashed a pane of glass in the front door. The counsellor in reporting the matter attached full blame to the older girl and the Board considered notifying the police. In the meantime the girl was completely barred from the centre. Three points should be made here to place this incident in perspective: 1) The girl in question was not considered a trouble-maker, however she was characteristically hot-tempered and had to be dealt with carefully; 2) The counsellor was rather new on the job having been there not quite two weeks; 3) The cost of replacing the window was negligible.

CASE II

Months later another girl, aged 17, who was a long-term client of the centre, threw a teacup and broke a window. This one was somewhat larger and more expensive than the one cited in Case I, and the Board's reaction would be justified if only these grounds are considered. On the other hand it is important to examine the case history of the client, if only to show the lack of understanding that the

Board had of the nature of the clients treated. She had several chronic physical ailments which tended to complicate each other since she was a diabetic. She had, on no less than two occasions, attempted suicide. She had been twice hospitalized for nervous breakdowns. At the time of this incident she was still under psychiatric care. She had experimented with the numerous street drugs available and had had some bad experiences, some of them serious. On the evening of the breaking of the window she had been drinking beer and consuming hashish and cocaine. I was present at the centre the following evening when the Chairman of the Board came to inspect the damage. He wished to call in the police and gather the damages in court. The Director (who was now the third such person in that office) agreed with this suggestion of the Chairman. A counsellor tried to discuss the incident with the Director, asking if the girl had been consulted with regard to the incident (she had not), if the damage had been intentional or accidental, and if there might be some insurance coverage. The Director's reply was perfunctory: He was paid to carry out the orders of the board and he would allow them to decide what policy to follow in such matters. Although some of the counsellors voiced their displeasure, there was little else that they could do.

An open charge account was held with one of the city's taxi companies. The counsellors on duty had authority to charge fares or to allow clients to charge fares only on occasions that appeared to be of a crisis nature. This expense was a constant thorn in the side of the Board's treasurer, since the budgeted monthly allotment was always

exceeded. At the beginning of every month the orders would filter down the chain of command" "Cut back on the taxi-bills, we're still overspending our account!" The staff however continued to spend in this area as they deemed it necessary, even when the situation was a non-crisis one. When this occurred the welfare of the client was involved and the counsellor was simply reluctant to turn him down. He would preface his concession with: "We're not really allowed to, but..." and alter his call sheet to accommodate the expense and protect his action. This was often done in the presence of fellow crisis workers and I accepted their silence as a sanction.

Perhaps the most striking example of the business attitudes involved is that of the financial arrangements surrounding the purchase and leasing of the building that housed the operation. It has already been stated that the funds from the centre's operation came from provincial and federal departments of government. This information while not concealed, was not splashed about, as was the name of the service organization for instance. It could easily be assumed that the project was in fact financially sponsored by this organization. When the

government grants were assured, however, the service club purchased the building involved outright and leased it to their Board of Governors for the Crisis Intervention Operation. While there is some justification for this in the Board's claim that the building was being sold by the original owners and that in buying it they were assuring permanent occupancy for their project, the transaction was not altogether unprofitable to the service organization. It is not my intention to praise or condemn any of the actions by either the Board or the staff in the examples cited above. It is simply to show as accurately as possible the primary interests of the two. So it was that the members of the board conducted themselves like the business men that they were. For the most part, the staff were either in opposition to their attitudes or unsympathetic to them.

VALUES - CONSERVATIVE vs UNORTHODOX

Groups in society develop similar value systems because they are exposed to common socialization processes. It is perhaps true that one of the most important common denominators is age. The life styles of different generations are basically different from one another. Values

implicit or inherent in a certain life-style are often radically different from those implicit or inherent in another. Such was the case in the social structure under scrutiny. It has been mentioned elsewhere that the staff were all in the age group 21-25 and that the Board members were in the 40-55 group. The Board members were members of the business-and professional-commercial segments of society, and dressed according to that genre. They maintained a conservative personal appearance, dressed in standard business suits and ties, were always clean shaven, and kept their hair trimmed short. They were firmly settled in their chosen occupation and in their family life. Most of the members of the staff were either university students, or uncommitted to a particular calling, as such they adhered to an unstructured, simpler life-style. Dress was extremely casual, as was grooming: both sexes wore blue jeans, all of the males had shoulder length hair and beards. Staff members were not settled in family units, no one was married or appeared to have any other sort of permanent attachment. The Board members were entirely anti-drug (illegal drugs) and maintained that no one convicted of a drug-offense could obtain employment with the project, regardless of his status or experience. It was unknown to the board, however, that

at least four of the personnel now employed at the centre had at some time been charged under the Narcotics Control Act. All of this was common knowledge to the staff and the Director, who had himself been convicted of a drug offence. Of the four, two were convicted of marijuana possession; one was convicted of trafficking in LSD; and the fourth had his case dismissed twice for lack of evidence, on two separate charges. (They were trafficking in hashish, and marijuana, respectively.) None of the staff expressed hostile attitudes towards many of the street drugs (usually the mild hallucinogens), nor did they hold users in contempt.

These two areas, life-styles and attitudes towards drugs, will be the only ones touched upon in this section. There is some overlapping in areas and as such, the material is best treated in following sections. It will become clear in these discussions that this contrast was a far-reaching and all-pervasive one.

SENTIMENTS - LOYALTY TO THE PARENT ORGANIZATION
vs
AFFINITY WITH THE CALLER-CLIENT

This area closely follows the theme introduced in the first one. Indeed, the divisions in this category

were as predictable and as evident as those occurring in the other two categories. The Service Organization was an established one and the members of the Board were senior members of that organization. This project was only one of the undertakings of the organization and as such was accorded peripheral status. The staff, on the other hand, had no attachments to any external body; to them the centre was the nucleus of the operation. As well, the staff were in direct contact with the centre and the caller-clients. They saw many of them daily, knew them on a first-name basis, were well aware of their problems, complaints, history, personality and were sympathetic to their state. They rarely saw the Board members and had only very general knowledge of their persons. On the other hand, the Board members had very little direct contact with the centre, clients and staff, while they had a more informal relationship with one another and their fellow members of the parent body. It is not farfetched to assume that they associated with one another outside the organization as well as within it. They were at the very least on a first-name basis with each other.

Evidence of this is reflected in both the policy and the program of the centre. It has been discussed in

an earlier section, with reference to finances and drugs, how the two groups embraced opposing views, and I see no need to further develop those categories.

The Board was primarily concerned with its public image, regardless of the actual work performed. One of the areas that the Board wished to develop was a drug-education program, aimed at the youth, through the city's schools. The staff however felt that the idea behind such programs, was outdated, and the programs themselves, superficial. Acting on information collected from unstructured interviews, the staff maintained that Drug Education Programs were largely ignored or scoffed at by the students. If they accomplished anything, it was all negative, for the presenting agency actually lessened their credibility in the eyes of the students. The staff also felt that the time consumed by such a venture could be more wisely spent in routine work, although the latter had a much lower public visibility ratio.

The Board's appetite for recognition carried over into other areas. They welcomed opportunities for press coverage of the operation, and encouraged staffers to make public appearances. The staff however, shared little of the Board's enthusiasm for these types of activity.

Firstly, these talks and interviews were shallow and tedious, accomplishing little. Secondly, the approach desired by the sponsoring agency, (or the atmosphere created by the public media) was not one based on facts and the actual operation of the centre, but on the incidents that created the greatest amount of alarm or sensation. The staff held a negative view of scare tactics, and refused to participate in this type of pursuit. While the Board enjoyed the public image of 'crusader' the counsellors could not afford to be pictured as such. To be classed so would only serve to alienate further, an already all too distant clientele.

As the operation progressed the staff were able to zero in on the areas requiring extensive work. One of these areas was working with the alcoholics and the derelicts who were numerous in the older sections of the city. The centre had been working for sometime with these people, however efforts were lacking in design and as such were ineffective. Because of the lack of specific programs to aid alcoholics, the Centre opened negotiations with a local chapter of Alcoholics' Anonymous so that they might make a joint effort with this organization to combat the abuse of alcohol. The Board refused to support the effort, and demanded that the Director discontinue this pursuit. This particular area was not a concern of theirs, they explained, however the

centre continued to be confronted with problems arising from this area. A similar disagreement arose with reference to the abuse of medical or prescription drugs. Some of the counsellors were inclined to state publicly that they had encountered serious problems with such abuses. One of the last things that the Board wished to hear was that the majority of drug problems (in any given period) involved the use of tranquilizers, diet pills, and barbituates, rather than marijuana and LSD, regardless of the validity of the arguments put forward to support this. They were concerned with running a drug crisis intervention centre and with demonstrating to the public that they were doing the utmost possible to combat the use of illegal narcotics.

MORAL EXPECTATIONS - TRADITIONAL vs INNOVATIVE

The Board expected a traditional employer-employee arrangement to exist. Counsellors would be paid a fixed salary to carry out designated tasks over a given time-period every week. The notion that a staff employee would act contrary to the policy of the Board was absurd. The counsellors however, thought of themselves as the primaries

in the operation. They viewed these "absentee supervisors" as figureheads, whose only important function was to act as trustees and co-signatories for the government grants that they had applied for. The staff felt that the Board members individually or collectively, knew little about young people and less about nonmedical drug usage. They were not expected to interfere in matters outside their realm; if they exerted pressure in order to do so, their policies for the centre lasted just about as long as did their physical presence in the same.

The counsellors were well-acquainted with both the suppliers and the consumers of illegal drugs but did not presume to judge, legally or morally, the weight of their actions. At no time, while I was in observation at the centre, did the individual counsellors attempt to discuss the proposition "drugs are harmful." Their approach was a candid presentation of the facts that neither condemned nor condoned experimentation but left the choice to the individual. This was not at all in line with the stance taken publicly by the Board, nor did it reflect a policy that they would choose to pursue. A similar division with reference to traffickers became evident when the Board decided to initiate a TIP program. This program originated

in the United States and derived its name from the phrase "Turn In A Pusher!" The centre was to receive anonymous telephone calls and pass on to the police this information that may lead to the arrest of those accused, and the seizure of the contraband. The staff at the centre unanimously refused to participate.

It should be evident from the above account that the Board was willing to co-operate in any way with the police. Staff members did not view their civic duty so conscientiously. They not only refused to co-operate but sometimes became accessories to crime because of their conduct. The end was the protection of the client and the means often unorthodox. A frequent occurrence was the discovery, by a parent, of drugs that belonged to an adolescent member of the family. The worried parent would call or come into the centre for advice. If the staff member received a telephone call he would first urge the parent to destroy the evidence by flushing it through the toilet, to refrain from notifying the police and to come in with the teenager for a chat. If the drug was brought into the centre for inspection, the counsellor would usually destroy it in the same manner. When police arrived or called at the centre looking for information or people,

the staff member would deny having any knowledge of the situation. When charges were pending against clients, staff members intervened with both police and plaintiff in order to have the indictment dropped or ameliorated. Similarly counsellors appeared in court on behalf of clients (who were no newcomers to the dock), issuing pleas for clemency and testifying to their good character, regardless of their culpability.

The Board of Governors (and the Director) made a number of rules that were to apply to the centre. They were made with the best intentions for the well-being of the centre and the general protection of the staff. Some of these were none-the-less poorly enforced or ignored. Alcoholic beverages and drugs were forbidden on the premises. Nevertheless there were clients who were sometimes allowed to enter with this contraband, if they kept it well concealed. Clients were not permitted on any floor except the first — yet it was not unusual for them to roam all three unrestricted. Clients were never permitted to be left unattended by a counsellor, but this often was the case. Chronic drunks, alcoholics, and tramps were not allowed to visit, but most of the counsellors always took them in. Regulations forbade clients to sleep

overnight at the centre, but if circumstances warranted, the crisis-worker turned a blind eye. For infractions of one kind or another, caller-clients would be banned from the premises by the management or the Board; the guilty party would, in ninety per cent of the cases, be re-admitted within a week. As in the other categories, the counsellors chose to give priority to the client's interest and second place to all others.

In the previous three sections I have attempted to describe tendencies which were more or less readily apparent. This final category coincides with the previous three in establishing differentials based on diverse social status. The position taken by the Board was simple and steadfast. There are social and legal problems resulting from the abuse of non-medical drugs. In order to rectify the situation, the 'crazy, mixed-up kids' who have been the victims of exploitation must be counselled back to the straight and narrow. The 'pushers' who invent the misery must be punished. The counsellors' response was less simplistic, more complex; they had experienced a multiplicity of problems associated with drug users and felt that the operation had to provide more than 'aspirin and band-aid' treatment.

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- (1) Robert K. Merton, The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory, British Journal of Sociology. 1957, pp. 108-9.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ARTICULATION OF ROLES IN THE ROLE-SET.

With this theme of diversity in mind I would now like to examine each of the six Social Mechanisms for the Articulation of Roles in the Role-Set, as suggested by Merton, in the context of my study. Before doing so however, I would like to reassess the argument in total, including those aspects which are to be developed in this section.

First, it is assumed that each social status has its organized complement of role-relationships which can be thought of as comprising a role-set.

Second, the relationships are not only between the occupant of the particular status and each member of the role-set but, always potentially and often actually, between members of the role-set itself.

Third, to some extent, those in the role-set and especially those occupying disparate social statuses, may have differing expectations (moral and actuarial) of the behavior of the status-occupant.

Fourth, this gives rise to the problem of their diverse expectations being sufficiently articulated for the status- and role-structure to operate with a modicum of effectiveness.

Fifth, inadequate articulation of these role-expectations tends to call one or more social mechanisms into play, which operate to reduce the amount of patterned role-conflict below that which would be involved if these mechanisms were not operating.

Sixth, finally and importantly, even when these mechanisms are at work, they may not, in particular instances, prove sufficient to reduce the conflict of expectations among those comprising the role-set below the level required for the role-system to operate with substantial efficiency. This residual conflict within the role-set may be enough to interfere materially with the effective performance of roles by the occupant of the status in question. Indeed, it will probably turn out that this condition is the most frequent-role systems operating at considerably less than full efficiency. (1)

THE MECHANISM OF DIFFERING INTENSITY OF ROLE-INVOLVEMENT AMONG THOSE IN THE ROLE-SET

The first mechanism formulated by Merton seeks to show how the behavior of those in the social status is affected by the involvement of the other role-partners. He states: "This means that the role-expectations of those in the role-set are not maintained with the same degree of intensity. For some, this role-relationship may be of only peripheral concern; for others it may be central." (2) The Board of Governors consisted of senior members of the Service Club. All of these members had full-time occupations that were in no way connected with the activities of the club. These men all

had families, and the usual obligations to meet which are associated with the same. It is quite natural to assume that to these people these two concerns were of primary significance. In descending order of importance on a list of priorities would be social and economic security, recreation and leisure, and community service. It is possible and even likely, that these people were members of more than one charity or professional organization but since this information is difficult to obtain we can only postulate it here. The particular Service Club that sponsored the drug crisis centre carried a number of other community programs simultaneously, many that had been sponsored for some years. Thus, their energies and attention would be further subdivided between activities.

The Director of the operation had under his immediate jurisdiction five departments each with a co-ordinator. Four of these departments - Drug Crisis Intervention, Service Communications, Learning Transfer and Enabling Service - had long-range integrated goals but different functions. They maintained contact with the client and organized their branches to serve him. The fifth department was the research arm of the organization; it had only

indirect contact with the client, provided services to the other members and viewed its functions as terminal. It was the management of the entire operation that was of central concern to the director; his involvement in Crisis Intervention was if anything less than with the others, simply because it had a larger staff than the other departments to complete its tasks. The Director's burden was also increased by the fact that the controlling interests of the project were located outside the structure. The Board of Governors simply did not have the time to devote to the project, and the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate was located in another province.

The main concern of the centre, drug abuse, was also a current public concern, a discussion topic that required constant attention by the representatives of the drug crisis centre. The reasons for this are threefold: The word 'drug' itself had negative connotations and as such it was necessary to reassure the public exactly "what was going on down there." The appearance of the staff alone was enough to cause the general public to be skeptical of the intentions of the operation; the topic 'drug abuse' fell into a category of subjects that tended towards the controversial and the sensational. Newspaper interviews, radio and television.

talk shows and PTA discussion groups all clamoured for panelists and speakers; 3) medical associations availed themselves of the firsthand knowledge gathered by the counsellors, and requested the Director to participate in these educational seminars. As the Executive Director was responsible for public relations, as much as 30 per cent of his time was spent in this capacity. In addition to the demands to be met by the local traffic's requisitions, the Director was often called upon to travel both within and without the province. These conferences usually lasted from three days to a week and averaged four working days per month.

The Co-ordinator for Crisis Intervention was subjected to similar pressures in addition to her own assigned tasks, yet she never relinquished her position as a crisis worker. With regard to performance of chores, it was difficult to distinguish between her and her staff. She continued to act as a counsellor and thus her suggestions and advice on the day-to-day mechanics of the operation came as from one staff-member to another rather than as superior to subordinate. Not only were her ideas more in line with the claims of the staff, but her commands were accepted by them, since they were seen as being generated

from within the structure rather than being imposed from without. This type of extra participation can be attributed in part to the energy of the particular person involved but mostly to the demands created by the structure. The co-ordinator had been chosen from the ranks of the previous counsellors. Many of the more complicated relationships or more serious tasks required a great deal of experience and a thorough knowledge of the problem. She was the only employee with such a combination of qualities. The Co-ordinator's office was located on the bottom floor next-door to the staff's operating office. Clients failed to make the distinction and often infiltrated the former. Also, when the counsellor on duty was already occupied on a telephone or in session with a client, the co-ordinator would assist by taking other calls. The work-load was always heavy and the Co-ordinator did as much as possible to alleviate staff burdens. The organization was so short-staffed that there was no provision made for replacements in the event of sickness and other such upsets to the staff-schedule. For this reason the Co-ordinator worked to cover for coffee-breaks, meal-times and other times of staff-absence. Very often telephone calls came which made it necessary for counsellors to leave their post in order

to assist clients in one way or another. Some were routine absences of only fifteen to twenty minutes duration, while others required the counsellor to accompany the client to one of the city's hospitals, a time-consuming excursion. Whenever possible, the co-ordinator substituted for the absent counsellor. These illustrations should help elucidate the point of view, the attitude to work held by the co-ordinator.

The four main departments each had an appointed Board of Advisors (selected jointly by the Service Club and the Executive-Director). These boards had from three to five members, all chosen because of their association with a particular field. They were professional people (university faculty, medical specialists, etc..) whose positions along with their names carried an aura of respectability and credibility. Unfortunately, this was the extent of their contribution.

These people were selected (and agreed to serve) because of the nature of their position. Their training and experience rendered them valuable if not essential to the community. For the same reasons that they were important to this organization, so were they to countless others. The end result was that a very small amount of

guidance was available, and when it was it was not the guidance of the board as a whole. Scheduled meetings between the advisors and the staff went a similar route. At any set time some members were already booked up, or unable to be reached, or out of town on a conference, or else those who came on time had to leave early, while the others who were tied up at that time would follow along soon after. This type of haphazard arrangement continued throughout the duration of my study. Ideas were presented and plans made but little follow-up took place. The programs presented by the advisors were technically sophisticated and required tailoring to the local situation. The time and resources necessary for implementation were simply not available. Detailed reports were to be presented at intervals of three months; however these briefs were little more than general summaries padded here and there with case histories. These sessions were no more than formalities. The Board of Advisors as such were situated at a vantage-point distant from the workaday proceedings of the centre.

The projected budget for the centre was 80,000 dollars; 15,000 of this came through a provincial grant, which covered the salary of the Executive-Director and the basic operating costs of the centre. The remaining 65,000 dollars came

from the federal government and was used for all other expenses and salaries. Both federal and provincial departments had control over how the money was to be used; however, neither could possibly exercise control because of the nature of their involvement. In terms of structure, both departments were far-removed from the decision-making process. The provincial government department representative dealt with the Board of Governors who were responsible for the allocation of finances. The Governors in turn relied on the Director for exact determining of expenditure. The provincial government had no direct involvement in the physical operations of the centre - they approved a written proposal at the beginning of the fiscal term and were presented with a statement at the end... such was the extent of their involvement. The federal government through one of its departments (National Health and Welfare) had established an organization named the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate. Officers were located regionally to aid in the local control of drug abuse. There was no regional representative from the Directorate located in this province, presumably because the workload in other areas required a central station. It was determined then both by classification and geographic location that the interest and

involvement of the Directorate in the affairs of the Crisis Centre would be moderate in nature.

And so it was, by virtue of differing degrees of involvement, that the status-occupant was left relatively free from demands and interference by the other members of the role-set. Indeed, so prevalent was this state of affairs that the respective members of the role-set had only limited contact with one another. As we shall see, the impact of these encounters was sometimes cushioned by the operation of one or more social mechanisms.

DIFFERENCES OF POWER OF THOSE IN THE ROLE-SET

The second mechanism articulating the role-set is referred to by Merton as Differences of Power. He explains:

"A second potential mechanism for stabilizing the role-set is found in the distribution of power and authority. By power, in this connection, is meant the observed and predictable capacity to impose one's will in a social action; by authority, the culturally legitimized organization of power.

As a consequence of social stratification, the members of a role-set are apt not to be equally powerful in shaping the behavior of status-occupants. However, it does not follow that the individuals, group or stratum in the role-set which are separately most powerful uniformly succeed in imposing their demands upon the status-occupant, say, the teacher. This would only be so in circumstances that the

one member of the role-set has either a monopoly of power in the situation or outweighs the combined power of the others. Failing this special but, of course, not infrequent, situation, there may develop coalitions of power among some members of the role-set which enable the status-occupants to go their own way. The familiar pattern of a balance of power is of course not confined to the conventionally-defined political realm. In less easily visible form, it can be found in the workings or role-sets generally, as the boy who succeeds in having his father's decision offset his mother's opposed decision has ample occasion to know. To the extent that conflict-powers in his role-set neutralize one another, the status-occupant has relative freedom to proceed as he intended in the first place." (3)

Determinants that affect balances of power are not confined to degrees of authority, although the degree is the common denominator. It is also necessary to consider the types of power held and the context in which different types of control can be effectively exercised.

The Crisis Intervention Centre was administrated by the Service Club through a chain of command beginning with the Board of Governors and following through with the Executive-Director and the Co-ordinator for that section. Economic control was hypothetically maintained through the Provincial and Federal Governments' departments; however the former gave a free rein to the Board of Governors, while the latter held the Executive-Director to account. Both grants were banked as common funds, the finance chairman

(of the Board of Governors) having signatory power. The preparation of the budget and the actual spending remained the domain of the Executive-Director.

Structurally a somewhat awkward balance was the result. Everybody had a hand on the reins of power but none had total command of the bridle. The Board of Governors could expect subordination from the Director for he was directly in their employ. The staff, however, was paid by the funds obtained from the arrangement made between the Executive-Director and the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate. This office preferred to keep the project in the hands of the Director and staff as much as possible. The reason for this was twofold: the first was a matter of choice - they assumed that the staff were more in tune than anyone else with the operation of the centre and hoped to keep the influence of the Board to a minimum. (In the spring of 1973 representatives of this bureau helped the Director and Co-ordinators plan a coup d'etat designed to usurp power from the Board of Governors completely); the second was one of policy - government bureaus were highly reluctant to fund municipal government bodies, groups with religious affiliations or organized groups such as charity or service clubs, simply because of the clamour created by rival organizations would cause political repercussions.

The staff crisis workers were not exactly at the mercy of their employers. Their power was derived from the fact that they were, for the most part, veteran employees with relatively exclusive knowledge of how the operation worked. Their awareness of this situation (that capable replacements were hard to find) allowed them to act aggressively, if not defiantly. Furthermore, although the employees were in practice interviewed, screened and hired by the Director and Co-ordinator, they were in theory employees of the Board of Governors. This meant that action initiated by the Director could not actually be continued unless the Board concurred with his decision. One employee made this point in a private conversation with me some eight months after he had left the job of a crisis staffer. We were discussing a threat that the Director had made to discharge him:

"You see*****couldn't have fired me - that's why I didn't care at the time. It was Mr. _____ (Finance Chairman) who hired me as far as I was concerned; I had a long chat with him after and he assured me that***** (Director didn't have the authority to fire anybody."

The triangle that resulted operated to the benefit of the employees. In confrontations that occurred within the external structure, the Director almost always supported the staff, Director and Staff presenting a united front on policy. Although the staff had acted in concert in arriving at any particular decision, the Director alone had to put forward that position in the biweekly meetings with the Board. Regardless of the fashion in which he presented the argument, it was Director versus the Board of Governors from the point of view of the latter. Similarly, when the Director was forced to carry an unpopular resolution back to his staff he was the butt of their disdain. And when internal strife of a major nature occurred, the Director ran the risk of having his decisions regarding the staff off-set by the Board of Governors. The same situation often came to pass in minor conflicts in which the Co-ordinator for Crisis Intervention acted as a buffer, the Director having little opportunity for redress.

The four Co-ordinators and the Director were responsible for planning and evaluating the programs that were carried out. They met weekly to engage in discussion, present ideas, and to offer criticism on the centre as a

whole. This group often differed and dissident factions paired off. These partnerships were never permanent ones; as the alliances shifted from week to week.

Merton elaborates further on this mechanism explaining that:

"Thus, even in those potentially unstable structures in which the members of a role-set hold distinct and contrasting expectations of what the status-occupant should do, the latter is not completely at the mercy of the most powerful among them. Moreover, a high degree of involvement in his status reinforces his relative power. For to the extent that powerful members of his role-set are not primarily concerned with this particular relationship in the same degree as the status-occupant, they will not be motivated to exercise their potential power to the full. Within wide margins of his role-activity, the status-occupant will then be free to act, uncontrolled because unnoticed." (4)

The premise in this case is without fault but I can only agree with the first two points made with reference to this mechanism. It has already been mentioned that a high degree of involvement in a status enhances the relative power of the occupant. It was also noted how exclusivity and duration increased the amplitude of the power base.

It is further stated that powerful members of the role-set are not motivated to exercise their potential power to the full because they are not primarily concerned.

with their particular relationship; thus the status-occupants enjoy a measure of relief from their demands. However it was generally the case that no actual freedom would be gained. In the application of this second principle it was shown how a balance of power had been established through a compromise of those in authority. Any relaxation by one was compensated for by an increase in the power of the other. The only way that this principle could take effect in actual practice was if the machine operated in ideal cycles. An increase in demands by either would be neutralized by the demands of the other; an easing of the exercise of power by one would be accompanied by abatement by all. Without this perfect torque it is highly unlikely that the status-occupant "will be then free to act uncontrolled because unnoticed."

THE MECHANISM OF INSULATING ROLE-ACTIVITIES FROM OBSERVABILITY BY MEMBERS OF THE ROLE-SET.

"The occupant of a status does not engage in continuous interaction with all those in his role-set. This is not an incidental fact, but is integral to the operation of role-sets. The interaction with each member (individual or groups) of the role-sets is variously limited and intermittent; it is not equally sustained throughout the range of relationships entailed by the social status. This fundamental fact of role-structures allows for role-behavior which

is at odds with the expectations of some in the role-set to proceed without undue stress. For as we have seen at some length, effective social control presupposes an appreciable degree of observability of role-behavior. To the extent that the role-structure insulates the status-occupant from direct observation by some of his role-set, he is not uniformly subject to competing pressures. It should be emphasized that we are dealing here with a fact of social structure, not with individual adjustments whereby this or that person happens to conceal parts of his role-behavior from certain members of his role-set." (5)

It was the operation of this mechanism more than any other that gave the status-occupant freedom of activity as an individual. All previous discussion pertains to the 'crisis-worker' as a position in the centre, a nameless object that is important because of the forces acting upon it. This section deals with the status-occupant as a subject, active in his nominative setting.

The organization structure provided a marked degree of insulation. All of the parent groups were physically removed from the setting. The provincial government department which approved their grant were willing to leave the exercising of their interests to the Board of Governors and to the professional Board of Advisors. This latter group was mainly dependent on the Director and the Coordinator for their information, as other commitments prevented them from more extensive involvement. The sponsoring

group was a Service Club that met weekly, from its ranks were chosen a Board of Governors to manage the Crisis Intervention Centre. This board carried out its program through a Director, whom they met twice a month. On occasion a Board member dropped by the centre for a visit that lasted 20 or 30 minutes. These visits were never more frequent than once a month. Except for these two types of encounters, the members of the Board had no other physical contact with the Centre or its employees. They were of course largely concerned with their own occupations, families and affairs, as the status-occupants in these sets of roles.

The essential financing for the operation came through the federal government department of National Health and Welfare. This department had established in 1968 a Directorate as an answer to the growing problem of drug abuse. The headquarters for the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate in the Atlantic Region was Halifax, Nova Scotia — some 850 road (and sea) miles and 688 air miles from this city. As there was no representative in this province, the office of the Directorate made most of its contact by mail and telephone. Routine visits took place every two months, the duration of the stay varying from two to five days. It was because of these circumstances that the Di-

rectorate had limited association with the Crisis Centre.

It was a function of the organizational structure that insulated the Crisis Centre employees from their overseers. Internally a similar amount of latitude was enjoyed as a result of the exercise of the timetable. The Director and Co-ordinators kept business hours - 9 to 5, Monday to Friday. The Crisis Centre staff rotated on a shift schedule, operating in 12 hour units, night and day, seven days a week. The hours containing the greater percentage of the workload were always from 9 pm. to 3 am., a period when the activity of the counsellor was visible only to his colleague, volunteers and the client. Furthermore, the nights on which the greatest number of calls were made were those of the weekend, especially Friday and Saturday evenings. Neither the Director nor the Co-ordinators were working regularly at these times. Occasionally clients would report privately to the Director or the Co-ordinator any aberrant behavior on the part of the Crisis-worker. The subsequent confrontation, however, had little result, for there was no rebuttal to the worker's contradiction.

In his explanation of this third mechanism Merton mentions certain occupations that have by definition, more insulation than others:

"More broadly, the concept of privileged information and confidential communication in the professions — law and medicine, teaching and the ministry — has the same function of insulating clients from ready observability of their behavior and beliefs by others in the role-set. If the physician or priest were free to tell all they have learned about the private lives of their clients, they could not adequately discharge their functions." (6)

The Crisis Centre commonly dealt with medical, legal and highly personal matters. In addition to being entrusted with the confidence of the client, the Crisis-worker was often the recipient of privileged information given out by related agencies and professions. It was also sometimes the case that counsellors did not operate according to the letter of the law, or function according to the moral standards of the community. It was therefore an absolute necessity to maintain an atmosphere of confidentiality in most areas dealt with — for the protection of the client, the Crisis-worker and the reputation of the Centre itself. This general principle was recognized and supported by both staff and management. Counsellors were under no pressure to discuss the nature of a case, the methods employed, or the success and failure rates.

The physical layout of the centre facilitated seclusion. Three detached rooms were kept in which consultation could take place without interference. There were

as well three offices which housed both public and un-listed telephone numbers for private conversations. It was accepted practice for counsellors to leave the premises, if for one reason or another the client didn't wish to come to the centre. Hence complaints were received and problems discussed in restaurant-booths or in automobile-drives through the city.

The Director requested that each and every call or visit be logged separately on a call-sheet, provided by the centre for that purpose. These reports were so general however that they could at the most, only be utilized for statistical tabulation. There was no in-depth recording of the nature of the case and only the slightest sketch made of the diagnosis and of the final disposition of the case. (In an attempt to gather data for this study I pored over a few thousand of these sheets; for the most part they were so stereotyped as to prove hopelessly inadequate.)

The call-reports were this way partly by design and partly by chance. First of all, the nature of the worker was such that while he may have had little difficulty in appraising a situation and acting accordingly, he may not have been able to explain exactly what he had done. Phrases such as "got through to him"/ "helped him along"/ and "chat-

ted for awhile," did not go very far towards explaining the mechanics of gaining, and maintaining control in a given situation. Secondly, counsellors felt there was little need to prepare detailed reports which of necessity include information received in confidence, information which they felt should remain confidential. Private files were sometimes kept by individual counsellors who felt that they needed records, but they were unwilling to trust to the centre's cabinet. Thirdly, it was virtually impossible to keep call-sheets constantly concealed from the public. Since visitors and clients often crowded the offices, and counsellors frequently moved from one to the other, it was agreed by both the Director and the counsellors that the less available for roving eyes the better. Fourthly, the explicitness of these records varied with the amount of work per shift. When counsellors had problems of some importance to contend with or a series of demanding calls they had neither the time nor the inclination to write lengthy reports.

There was yet a third type of insulation provided, just as important as those which originated from the 'organizational structure' and the 'need for confidence.' It evolved partly from the type of methodology that had

been allowed to develop, but it was also inherent in the nature of the work itself. The centre maintained a number of telephone lines, the numbers of which were displayed in various places throughout the city. Approximately 60% of the contacts established came through these lines. They not only preserved the anonymity of the caller, but also gave the counsellor a choice as to the type of calls that he wished to accept, and how he would deal with them.

In addition to maintaining centre hours, counsellors participated in what was commonly termed 'follow-up work.' This extra effort was applied only to long-term multi-problem cases. Each counsellor had responsibility for three or four people (whom he met with regularly) in this category. A great number of these meetings took place outside of the centre, as counsellor and client took part in drives, shopping tours or lunches. The closeness between counsellor and client was not confined to long-term clients only, indeed it was part of a system that had grown with the centre and was now acknowledged as a constituent of the structure. When the centre first began its activity it had neither the space nor the qualified personnel for intensive counselling. This lack of sophistication became immeshed in the fabric of the organization for the absence

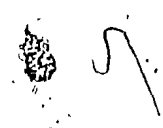
of defined criteria for the treatment of cases created a difficult-to-manage caseload. This encumbrance in turn made it difficult to employ the special talents of one counsellor to a series of related problems and militated against a regulated system of group counselling that would ensure homogeneity of suggested treatment and establish definite patterns of continuity. While the efficiency of the organization as a whole suffered because of this, the individual treatment accorded clients lost none of its effectiveness. It may have in fact, been heightened simply by the closeness of the established relationship. Whatever the absolute degree of effect, positive or otherwise, one thing that can be stated with certainty was that the 'confident system' furnished an extensive amount of insulation. All of the staff understood the composition of these liaisons and held them in high respect. Interference from any sector was unknown.

Not all of the clients had major problems, nor were they chronic-callers. Some 25% fell into the category of 'one-timers' - having called but once, they would never call again. The brevity of the relationship and the facility with which disposition was given reduced the visibility of these contacts to the extent that the majority

of them simply went unnoticed, their existence confirmed only by a number on the current call-sheet.

The functions of the Crisis Centre were loosely defined, the concept of the Centre itself being of somewhat general scope. As well as giving counsel, assistance and information, organizing and guiding, making referrals, finding employment and accommodations and other related activities, the Centre was also used as a hang-out, a social centre, and a communications and resource depot by a certain segment of the clients. At times it was impossible for even the trained eye to determine who were the clients (with specific problems or complaints) from the occasional client (just visiting) from the visitors. A counsellor might be involved in serious consultation with a client or simply engaged in social conversation with a visitor; such was the nature of the enterprise.

One of the most important functions of the operation was its handling of referrals. Over a period of time a file was compiled of all those various people or agencies that were able to render valuable assistance and/or who were sympathetic to the cause. In most of these cases a great deal of research was done beforehand so that the receiving agent had relevant data as a resource if he so



needed it. Once treatment had been administered or suggested, the case was returned to the counsellor with follow-up instructions, if this was required. This system of referral meant that while diagnosis and the subsequent decision as to the course of treatment took place at the centre, the actual enactment of recommended treatment took place outside the premises. The decision-making process had a low visibility factor; its complement, the treatment itself, was of a more tangible nature, but not readily available for scrutiny by the role-partners in the role-set.

All of this is to say that in this type of operation a considerable amount of insulation is supplied directly by the structure, more so than would be available in organizations of comparable size dealing with an undefined population.

THE MECHANISM MAKING FOR OBSERVABILITY BY MEMBERS OF THE ROLE-SET OF THEIR CONFLICTING DEMANDS UPON THE OCCUPANTS OF A SOCIAL STATUS

Drawing on the case already stated in his two previous points Merton formulates his fourth postulate:

"This mechanism is implied by the two foregoing accounts of the power structure and

patterns of insulation from observability; it therefore needs only passing comment here. As long as members of the role-set are happily ignorant that their demands upon the occupants of a status are incompatible, each member may press his own case upon the status-occupants. The pattern is then many against one. But when it is made plain that the demands of some members of the role-set are in full contradiction with the demands of the other members, it becomes the task of the role-set, rather than the task of the status-occupant, to resolve these contradictions, either by a struggle for exclusive power or by some degree of compromise. As the conflict becomes abundantly manifest, the pressure upon the status-occupant becomes temporarily relieved.

In such cases, the occupant of the status subjected to conflicting demands and expectations can become cast in the role of the tertius gaudens, the third (or more often, nth) party who draws advantage from the conflict of others. The status-occupant, originally at the focus of the conflict, virtually becomes a more or less influential bystander whose function it is to highlight the conflicting demands by members of his role-set and to make it a problem for them rather than for him, to resolve their contradictory demands. Often enough, this serves to change the structure of the situation." (7)

This mechanism did not influence the welfare of the status-occupant to any great degree, in our present study. The main reason for this was the organizational and physical separation of the three controlling agents — the Executive-Director, the Board of Governors and the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate. There are however,

circumstances that I would like to take note of at this point. One stems from the fact that all communications between the Directorate and the Board of Governors passed through the office of the Executive-Director. The latter possessed a slight but nonetheless distinct advantage of being able to represent the Directorate's point of view in a manner influenced by his own interpretations. The same situation arose when the Director was representing the Board of Governors to out-of-town office of the Directorate. Differences between the Board and the Directorate were always kept exposed by the Executive-Director simply because it kept the two from jointly pursuing him and the centre, when one of the bodies differed in opinion. The issue that was kept smouldering was the area of concentration to be followed by the centre. The Board of Governors favoured a focus on the Crisis Centre activities as this was the original design of the Service Club, but the Directorate favoured the other programs that were being sponsored by the centre. This was a matter of government policy, crisis centres were not of a primary interest, and funds would not be allotted for them unless they were incorporated with other specified programs.

With respect to the internal structure there were two mechanisms in operation that increased the visibility of conflicting demands made upon the occupants of a social-status. The second floor of the building contained the offices of the organization, however these offices were not self-contained. They consisted of desks located in two large adjoining rooms. All routine business transpired in these rooms so that the information of one section was common knowledge of the other. Opinions travelled unofficially throughout the offices, co-ordinators giving personal views on matters unrelated to their particular department. This arrangement provided, in an informal manner, for a potential perpetual exchange of ideas and arguments.

On the other hand, the organization held two formal meetings weekly. The first was between the Co-ordinator of Crisis Intervention and the crisis staff with the Executive-Director as chairman and the second was between the four Co-ordinators and the Executive-Director. Each of these settings provided a hebdomadary forum whereby the conflicting demands of the management were brought into view.

THE MECHANISM OF SOCIAL SUPPORT BY OTHERS IN SIMILAR SOCIAL STATUSES WITH SIMILAR DIFFICULTIES OF COPING WITH AN UNINTEGRATED ROLE-SET

"This mechanism presupposes the not unusual structural situation that others occupying the same social status have much the same problems of dealing with their role-sets. Whatever he may believe to the contrary, the occupant of a social status is usually not alone. The very fact that it is a social status means that there are others more or less like-circumstanced. The actual and potential experience of confronting conflicting role-expectations among those in one's role-set is to this extent common to the occupants of the status. The individual subject to these conflicts need not, therefore, meet them as wholly private problems which must be handled in a wholly private fashion. Such conflicts of role-expectations become patterned and shared by occupants of the same social status." (8)

In larger groups, professional organizers are able to formalize social support simply by utilizing the collective force of numbers. But here it is necessary to consider how social support is generated in small group situations. Two main factors which influence mutual support between members occupying the same social status are: i) the extent and number of the conflicting demands made; and ii) the durability of the social fibres bonding the members together.

The potential for influence of the first factor is

self-evident. It is quite natural to assume that threats from without are conducive to strengthening unity within. This operation had potential for discord ever-present because the role-partners were differently located in the social structure. These differences have been enumerated in an earlier section of this study and it is unnecessary to document them further. The subject matter itself was the underlying source of antagonism. The public represented by the media, various educational institutions and community organizations adopted a hostile attitude, in principle, towards illegal drugs. They brought pressures to bear on the service club that operated the premises in order to have it reflect their views. The Director and his staff were dealing with people — not cliches, because of this they had quite different ideas of how the centre should operate. The resulting forces upon the crisis worker served to estrange him from both parties, consolidating resistance into support.

The second factor which generated social support among the status-occupants arose directly out of the structure and function of the organization. The cohesiveness of the group was re-inforced by the nature of the work and the setting in which it was done. The group was

small enough for each member to get to know the others fairly well. The long shifts provided many slow periods which afforded extensive opportunity for conversation.

All members of the group were dealing with problems of a similar nature, problems that were often very serious ones. The severity of the problems and their relation to the human condition subjected the status-occupant to constant pressures, ones that did not end with the shift. All this served to heighten each worker's awareness of the others' experience, thereby increasing the degree of empathy felt.

The Crisis Centre handled a variety of problems. Each case was dealt with by a single counsellor acting privately. The structure that developed out of these principles of confidentiality and anonymity gave rise to a distinct operation. Individuality was the key-word in the manner of treatment given by the workers, with personal flair accounting for technique and intuitive 'savoir-faire' being substituted for schematic design and working models. This personalized methodology was recognized by the status-occupants as a mode of operation unique to the group.

The work done by the status-occupant in the Crisis

Centre was of a singular nature. This condition was one that was shared only by the occupant-partners. They had no outside colleagues or associates with whom they could compare notes or rely on for social support. They were not affiliated with any national organization or part of a certified union. They were in fact solitary occupants of the status, and the knowledge of this intensified the mutual support they offered each other.

ABRIDGING THE ROLE-SET: DISRUPTION OF ROLE-RELATIONSHIPS

"This is, of course, the limiting case in modes of coping with incompatible demands upon status-occupants by members of the role-set. Certain relationships are broken off, leaving a consensus of role-expectations among those that remain. But this mode of adaptation is possible only under special and limited conditions. It can be effectively utilized only in those circumstances where it is still possible for the status-occupant to perform his other roles, without the support of those with whom he has discontinued relations. Otherwise put, this requires that the remaining relationships in the role-set are not substantially damaged by this device. It presupposes that social structure provides the option to discontinue some relationships in the role-set as, for example, in a network of personal friendships. By and large, however, this option is far from unlimited, since the role-set is not so much a matter of personal choice as a matter of the social structure in which the status is embedded.

Under these conditions, the option is apt to be that of the status-occupant removing himself from the status rather than that of removing the role-set, or an appreciable part of it, from the status." (9)

There is little that one can add to this statement as its explicitness gainsays the need for expansion. In a structured role-set, such as the one with which I have been dealing, the status-occupant faced conditions such that his occupancy in the role-set depended on i) the differences between his role-expectations as status-occupant, and those held by his role-partners; ii) the extent to which these social mechanisms have functioned to mitigate the resulting potential disturbances incurred by the differences. I have attempted to demonstrate the nature and degree of these differences and describe as well the functioning of the social mechanisms.

Dismissals and resignations occurred by both members of the staff and the management of the operation; this was especially prominent towards the end of my observation period. Certainly some but not all of these terminations could be attributed to the pressures affirmed by incompatible demands and residual conflict. It may seem contradictory to complete this discussion on the effectiveness of the operation of these social mechanisms by declaring that the status occupant often became removed

from the status. However Merton himself allowed some provision for this:

"...even when these mechanisms are at work, they may not, in particular instances, prove sufficient to reduce the conflict of expectations among those in the role-set below the level required for the role-system to operate with substantial efficiency. This residual conflict within the role-set may be enough to interfere materially with the effective performance of roles by the occupant of the status in question." (10)

It is my opinion that this combination of social mechanisms is able to furnish moderate protection, that is, so that no single circumstance or situation would cause a major disruption within the role-set. However over a period of time the accumulation of residual conflict becomes concentrated such that the mechanisms are no longer able to keep the conflict visibility in check. The status occupant in this case has little choice. As Merton puts it: "Typically, the individual goes, and the social structure remains." (11) The remaining operation may follow either of two courses: i) status-occupants are replaced by members who are apt to follow traditional policy of the centre, or ii) status-occupants are replaced by members who are similar to their predecessors. In the former case it may be hypothetized that the actual performance of the centre will change. In the latter instance

the operation will carry on much as before. As Merton suggests: "...social systems are forced to limp along with that measure of ineffectiveness and inefficiency which is often accepted because the realistic prospect of final improvement seems so remote as sometimes not to be visible at all." (12)

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- (1) Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, (Glencoe, Illinois), The Free Press, rev. ed. (1957). p. 380.
 - (2) Ibid., p. 371
 - (3) Ibid., pp. 113-4
 - (4) Merton, op. cit., p. 373
 - (5) Ibid., p. 374
 - (6) Ibid., p. 375
 - (7) Ibid., pp. 376-7
 - (8) Ibid., pp. 377-8
 - (9) Ibid., p. 379
 - (10) Ibid., p. 380
 - (11) Ibid., p. 379
 - (12) Ibid., p. 380:

APPENDIX A

HISTORY OF CRISIS DRUG ALERT

A. Origins

In 1971, the Service Club of East City and the New Service Club of West City formed a joint committee known as the NSC Operation Drug Alert to provide information on the non-medical use of drugs to the local public and to assist persons temporarily indisposed or seriously ill from drug usage. Attention was directed specifically to the local youth as they were ostensibly the largest segment of the population engaged in the non-medical use of drugs. Having consulted the City Police, R.C.M.P., and both the medical and legal professions, a drug crisis centre was established with the consent of city officials on the outskirts of the City, near the town of Carville with 8,000 inhabitants. The site was chosen because at the time many residents did not want a centre in the City proper.

A farm house and a barn were leased to ODA which had received a grant of \$25,000.00, from the Provincial Government for the first year's operating and capital

costs. Concurrently, the joint committee forming ODA became an incorporated body consisting of membership from both Service Clubs and was administered by a Board of Directors with equal representation from said clubs. Eight thousand dollars were obtained from the Federal Government for eight full time paid workers. In addition to an Executive-Director's salary which was paid from the Provincial Government operating grant. Many volunteers were available and some were accepted after screening.

B. ODA AIDHOUSE - Summer and Fall 1971

ODA Aidhouse operated as a twenty-four, seven day a week drug crisis centre near Carville, under the direction of Reverend B. Giddion, who with his wife and child resided at the centre. Services available included the following:

1. Immediate assistance for persons with drug problems of a critical nature, i.e., bummer trip, a freak out. Such assistance involved an 'around the clock' telephone service, talk downs and the provision of transportation for persons needing immediate professional medical attention. At no time were any drugs permitted on the premises.

2. A Counselling Service:

ODA personnel saw counselling as interacting with a person seeking assistance in such a way as to enable him to understand his existing situation, then the ways and means were discussed at length. A list of supportive services was always available and persons needing further assistance, medical, legal, employment or otherwise were referred to them.

3. Education Program

Discussions were held with a diversity of groups consisting of persons who were parents, youth, teachers, doctors, nurses, pre-med students, etc.. Numerous problems were considered and the non-medical use of drugs was examined in reference to family, school, and work life.

Literature dealing with drugs was available at the centre and at group meetings and was mailed to persons requesting it. A daily inventory of local drugs was taken and persons asking for a description of these drugs were informed of the substance when known.

4. An Arts and Craft Program was planned for the centre but it never really materialized.

STAFF

Besides the Executive-Director who was a Clergyman, the staff was composed of a mixture of students and non-students. Many were well acquainted with the 'drug scene' in Crosstown and rendered invaluable assistance because of it. For instance, occasionally a hospital would refer a person to us because the staff could not understand the local drug argot and insisted on diagnosing only a physical ailment by asking stock questions like "Where does it seem to hurt?" to someone tripping on acid. Lacking professional training, the staff tried to acquire sufficient medical and psychiatric first aid knowledge to cope with 11 hour cases. When necessary, staff relied on supportive consultation with especially the medical and legal professions and employment services. Most of our interaction with persons seeking extensive aid involved peer counselling.

"Case" histories of persons seeking long term assistance were documented and filed. Staff agreed generally that internal documentation was necessary, particularly if more than one member of staff were to interact with long term contacts. Otherwise, undue frustration and anxieties would be mutually experienced by Staff and Contact.

DECISION MAKING

All decision making was preceded by lengthy discussion among staff with the Executive-Director, usually at weekly meetings. The Executive-Director invariably endorsed staff wished decisions of major import were submitted to the Board of Directors for final approval.

RELOCATION OF ODA

In January of 1972, ODA transferred its facilities to a three storey building on Barleycorn Street, in the downtown business section of Crossdale. The original

Aidhouse proved to be too far from Crossdale proper and excepting Carville youth, few persons were able to consult us directly. Besides this, the house and barn were unsuitable for winter occupancy.

Under the terms of the lease of the Barleycorn Street property, the Board of Directors had written in a provision to purchase the property within the first six months of ~~the~~ lease, which expires at the end of December 1972. The reason for this was to protect our occupancy, as we were informed that the owners definitely would be selling the property rather than continue rental. Arrangements were made to have the option of property owners transferred to the Service Club of East City, who financed the cost by having twenty of its members guarantee the sum of \$1,000.00 each. The ground floor of the building provides office space, a lounge area and a quiet room. On the second floor, there are kitchen facilities and a room which is used primarily for group meetings and a quiet room when necessary. The third floor is used as living quarters by the Executive Director. (1)

SERVICES

Between January and August of 1972, ODA provided mainly drug crisis intervention services. Our drug crisis prevention services were generally educational. We enjoyed some success in discussing the drug problem and its complexities with high school and university students, besides numerous civic groups. Actually, little was achieved in the area of direct rehabilitation, as we referred most persons needing such assistance to other agencies.

STAFF

Staff capabilities remained quite static until July and August of this year. This may be attributed to lack of leadership and the need for upgrading the skills of staff members. Although equal to a drug crisis situation, nevertheless, staff members were unacquainted with more recent experiments in drug prevention and rehabilitation.

EVALUATION

During the latter half of July, the Executive-Director, Rev. B. Giddion and his staff initiated an evaluation of services under the guidance of a new Executive-Director, Mr. C. Dravidson, and a reorientation was devised for ODA. After carefully combing our internal documentation reports and available files, it seemed to us that drug crisis per se was on the decline in Crossdale. For example, our most recent figures show that during the month of August 1972, only 510% or 28 of our total contacts (608) were persons experiencing a drug crisis. During the same period last year, almost double the number of drug crisis was recorded. Our theory is that the use or abuse of drugs has not decreased; rather persons using drugs have become more refined in handling many of the immediate problems arising from that use, though other theories can be postulated for the figure change. (2)

In August of 1972, we also received 291 telephone calls and 289 visits or 47.5% and 47.5% respectively of

our total contacts. Most of the persons who phoned in or visited us were connected with drugs or alcohol in some way. Many of them complained about nothing to do because either they could think of little to do or if they had something to do, it never materialized, for lack of facilities. Others were struggling persistently through a labyrinth of family, school, and unemployment problems and seemed unable to cope with much else. Considering the above, we propose the following reorientation and reorganization of ODA.

DRUG CRISIS INTERVENTION

ODA will offer immediate assistance to persons experiencing ill-effects from drug usage. We will be available twenty-four hours a day, every day of the week. Presently we have eleven salaried workers employed in this service. Since our greatest influx of 'crisis' type visits or phone calls is between 8 p.m. and 4 a.m., we will be able to afford adequate services with four paid workers, ten volunteers, and a paid staff member. Already we have started preparations for this transition

as our funds will be depleted by October 1, of this year. The staff member and paid workers will be selected from those personnel currently engaged in crisis intervention. Volunteers will be screened during a seven day in-service training program. The staff member, paid workers, and volunteers will be chosen on the basis of commitment and affability, willingness to improve their knowledge of drugs and supportive services, the ability to make precise decisions in a crisis situation and a familiarity with the Crossdale 'drug scene' which goes without saying. Also, an effort will be made to train volunteer high school and university students to implement an on-going education program entailing the distribution of literature and more importantly speaking to their respective peer groups and local civic organizations.

The drug crisis centre, as it has existed, has given us many contacts with the young people of Crossdale, more specifically with the many young people who live in the immediate area of ODA. Through this contact we have become aware of the sense of alienation, disaffection or meaninglessness that people feel. Most lack a sense of

commitment to anything specific. It is because of this knowledge gained in the crisis centre that we suggest the establishment of a Learning Service.

LEARNING SERVICE

As stated elsewhere, most of our contacts were youths having an abundance of time and energy and no outlets. Some were intensely dissatisfied with nothing to do, save walking the streets, hanging around corners, stores, sometimes creating disturbances for amusement. In a few instances, 'doing dope' to excess was an abortive attempt to enjoy a merry 'trip' to a better place as (there is nowhere to go and nothing to do anyhow). Too many of our contacts appeared to be inordinately preoccupied with personal problems for lack of imaginative direction. This is not to say none of them have serious problems. Also, some persons with whom we conversed were high school drop-outs and they showed no abiding desire to return to school, though they are painfully aware that to get on according to contemporary social standards one must have a trade or a post-secondary education. In light of these observations we propose the creation of a learning service whereby we

will provide counselling and resources so that youths disaffected in some way, whether in or out of school, can tax their imaginations and do what they will within a study framework of their own choosing. We prepose to do this by:

1. Having consulted the local youth a catalogue of interests will be compiled.
2. Persons specialized and qualified in an assortment of fields, from motor mechanics to number painting, will be asked to guide youth in their "chosen studies." Tradesmen, teachers and anyone capable of stimulating youth to improve themselves, whether for fun or to get a job, will be registered as resource personnel. Unremunerative service will be encouraged. Representations to the local business community for funds, material, space and personnel will be made, as some firms have expressed a growing concern about drug abuse.

We should like to show how this service is directly related to drug crisis intervention by furnishing the following example.

Cathy is a young girl who upon several visits to the crisis centre was perceived to be very wrapped up in her problems. Her intolerance of her situation is constantly reinforced by her peer group who are tied into the same brittle framework. The staff find she has and could further develop outside interests such as weaving. Here we would provide the learning service.

We could direct her and others sharing the same interest to several weavers in town whom we know to be willing to provide her with the necessary patience and expertise. If the girl becomes satisfied with her craft she might refrain from immediate drug usage and adopt a more positive attitude towards her situation, develop an improved concept of self. We guarantee no sure plan for rehabilitation. However, the possible opportunity does exist in that the girl is involved with the community; people are willing to spend time and effort in assisting her craft development; and then she becomes less problem orientated.

In the learning service, youths with drug problems will be our main concern. Young people not experiencing such difficulties can also enjoy the service. The learning service idea arose out of discussions we have had with members of the public who have expressed a concern and interest for young drug users. (3)

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- (1) There were some major changes made during the observation period. Two of the third floor offices were used for business purposes. The Director had located elsewhere by February of 1973, he did however retain a small room on the third floor for personal occupancy.
 - (2) There seems to be a subtle shift of emphasis here. This paper was prepared (in anticipation of a \$65,000 grant) for Federal Government perusal. The Federal Government was not interested in financing drug crisis centres per se, but would agree to allot funds for crisis work only if the focus was in other areas, and crisis work appeared as a supplement. None of the figures quoted here or elsewhere have any statistical reliability. Both of the terms 'drug' and 'crisis' are subject to individual interpretation; what became recorded as a 'contact' at this period could have been a potential suicide or a fellow employee, inquiring about the arrival of his clerk.
The Director could and often did manipulate the classification of incoming calls.
 - (3) In the following sections I have deleted:
(i) a similar description of the Enabling Service and the Social Communication Service. The former was a self-help program for the poor while the latter was a self-appointed co-ordinating agent for organizations that dispensed social services; (ii) the methods for evaluating each of the programs; (iii) a brief conclusion;
because they can add nothing further to history or structure of the organization; I include below a financial statement submitted as a proposed budget. This table does not accurately describe the financial

or organization structure. It is my opinion that it was either prepared on short notice or intended to serve as a guide only. Regardless it was subject to some revision. I include it here for two purposes:

- (i) to document the appropriate expenditures of the project
- (ii) to demonstrate the lack of sophistication of the Director and his staff with references to areas of business.

B U D G E TOPERATION DRUG ALERT

Budget for fiscal year ending March 31, 1973, to which current application applies.

	<u>INDIVIDUAL BUDGET ITEMS</u>	<u>SUBTOTALS</u>
1. Project Personnel		
A. NAMES		
1 staff for Drug Intervention	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
1 staff for Service Communication	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
1 staff for Learning Service	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
1 staff for Enabling Service	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00
		<u>\$ 30,000.00</u>
4 paid workers in Drug Intervention	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 26,000.00
B. FRINGE BENEFITS	\$ 3,360.00	\$ 3,360.00
2. Travel and Sustenance		
A. Three staff members will fly to Milkville for a week to study similar projects. They will pay for their own meals.		
Travel	\$ 255.00	
Hotel	\$ 210.00	<u>\$ 465.00</u>
B. The Executive-Director and one staff member will fly to a large urban area for a week to study similar projects. Free accommodations will be available.	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00

	<u>INDIVIDUAL BUDGET ITEMS</u>	<u>SUBTOTALS</u>
3. OFFICE EXPENSES		
Pamphlets and Books	\$ 300.00	\$
Advertising	\$ 300.00	\$ 600.00
4. OPERATING COSTS NOT MET BY PROVINCIAL GRANT	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
5. Other Income available for Project (Provincial grant for rent and maintenance of Barleycorn building plus Executive-Directors salary)	\$15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
6. Estimate of Project Costs	\$79,925.00	\$ 79,925.00
7. A. Project grant requested		\$ 64,925.00
B. If the requested project grant only covers a six month period then our figure will be \$33,245.00. The staff members and the paid members salaries and fringe benefits will be halved as will operating costs. All other listed budget items will remain the same.	\$33,245.00	\$ 33,245.00

APPENDIX B

Throughout this study I have tried by various means to construct an argument based on the diversity of member-occupants of the role-set, and their corresponding locus within the social structure.

It is usually difficult to adequately frame such assertions because of the nature of the variables used to locate the respective positions. If one makes an acute representation he risks being considered presumptuous; if he chooses to be uncritical, his argument remains immature.

Further clarification of the issue might be furnished by the following list report. The staff and management planned, with the approval of the Non-Medical Use of Drugs Directorate, to remove the Service Club incumbents from their positions and replace them with an entirely new slate of officers.

They selected and invited the following people to serve as a new Board of Governors:

A Human Relations Training Officer working in a community development department with the Provincial Government.

The Director of Citizen Rights Association.

A Doctor based at a University Counselling Centre.

The Director of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Foundation.

A Secretary and Organizer working with a Poison Control Centre at a Children's Hospital.

A Senior Officer with a Student Affairs Department at a University.

The Director of Curriculum on the Faculty of Education at a University.

A Board Member of Alcoholic's Anonymous.

A Parole Officer with the National Parole Board.

This bold but serious venture was not successfully completed.

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